PRO EVO 3 THE RONALDO OF FOOTIE GAMES GETS EVEN BETTER

14 NEW SCREENS!

computer and video GAMES

GOLDEN BALLS!

UK'S FIRST HANDS-ON VERDICT

GET THE EXCLUSIVE SNITCH ON PS2'S BROOMIN' AWESOME POTTER GAME

T.H.U.G.

TONY HAWK SKATES ROUND VICE CITY

THIS YOU'VE GOTTA SEE!

CVG EXCLUSIVE

SMACK DOWN!

HERE COMES THE PAIN

Harry Potter™

QUIDDITCH WORLD CUP

WORLD'S FIRST PICS & FACTS OF PS2'S HOTTEST WRESTLER

TOMB RAIDER EXPERT GUIDE

LARA'S TOUGHEST BITS TORN OPEN ! EVERY UPGRADE UNVEILED

SUMMER GAMES SPECIAL!

Splinter Cell 2, Advance Wars 2, True Crime, Colin McRae 3, Viewtiful Joe, Chaos Legion, GhostHunter, The Great Escape, Wario World, Buffy 2 & stacks more!

FIFA 04

IT'S GOT BECKHAM'S STYLE, BUT HOW DOES IT PLAY? FIRST HANDS-ON VERDICT

PLUS! PLAYED TILL OUR FINGERS BLED!

BOND: ALL OR NOTHING

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NEWS OF THE WORLD

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"A VERY FUNNY FILM, IT'S A WINNER"

JONATHAN ROSS – DAILY MIRROR

JOHNNY ENGLISH

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WANNA KNOW WHO DIES?

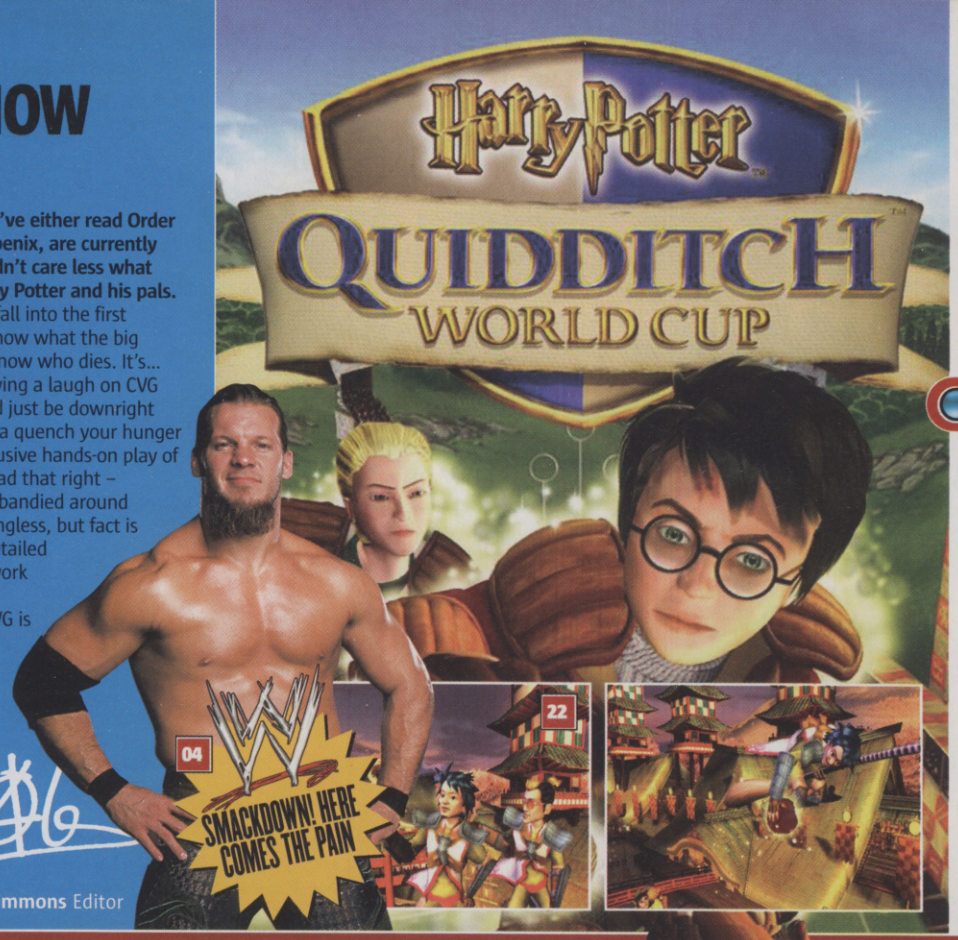
By now you've either read Order Of The Phoenix, are currently doing so or couldn't care less what happens to Harry Potter and his pals.

Personally I fall into the first category, so I know what the big mystery is – I know who dies. It's...

We like having a laugh on CVG but that would just be downright evil. So instead we're gonna quench your hunger for all things Potter with the exclusive hands-on play of Quidditch World Cup. Yup, you read that right – exclusive. It's a word that's often bandied around by other mags like it were meaningless, but fact is you won't find all the hot info, detailed screens and gorgeous Potter artwork anywhere else in the world.

But then you already know CVG is *always* first with the games you want to read about. That's why we've got the lowdown on Pro Evolution Soccer 3 first. That's FIRST. Which means you know about it before your mates. Unless, of course, they buy CVG too.

Alex Simmons Editor



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Yep, we've played it AND got all the inside info from WWE's creative director. Ouch!

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The screens you've been gagging for! Must-see update

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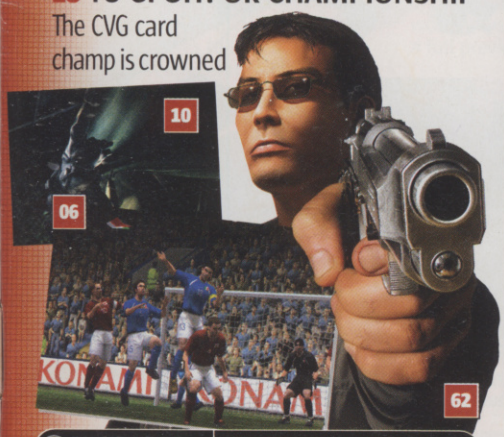

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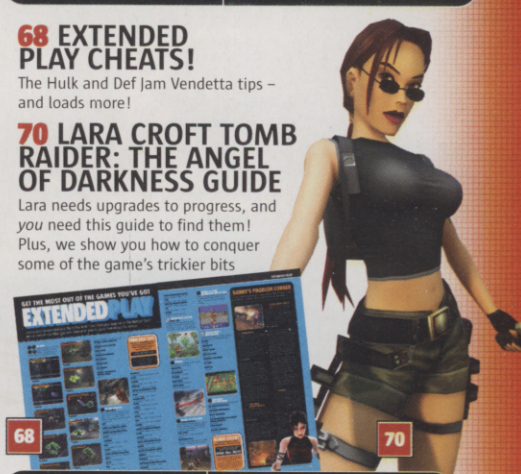
Lara needs upgrades to progress, and *you* need this guide to find them! Plus, we show you how to conquer some of the game's trickier bits



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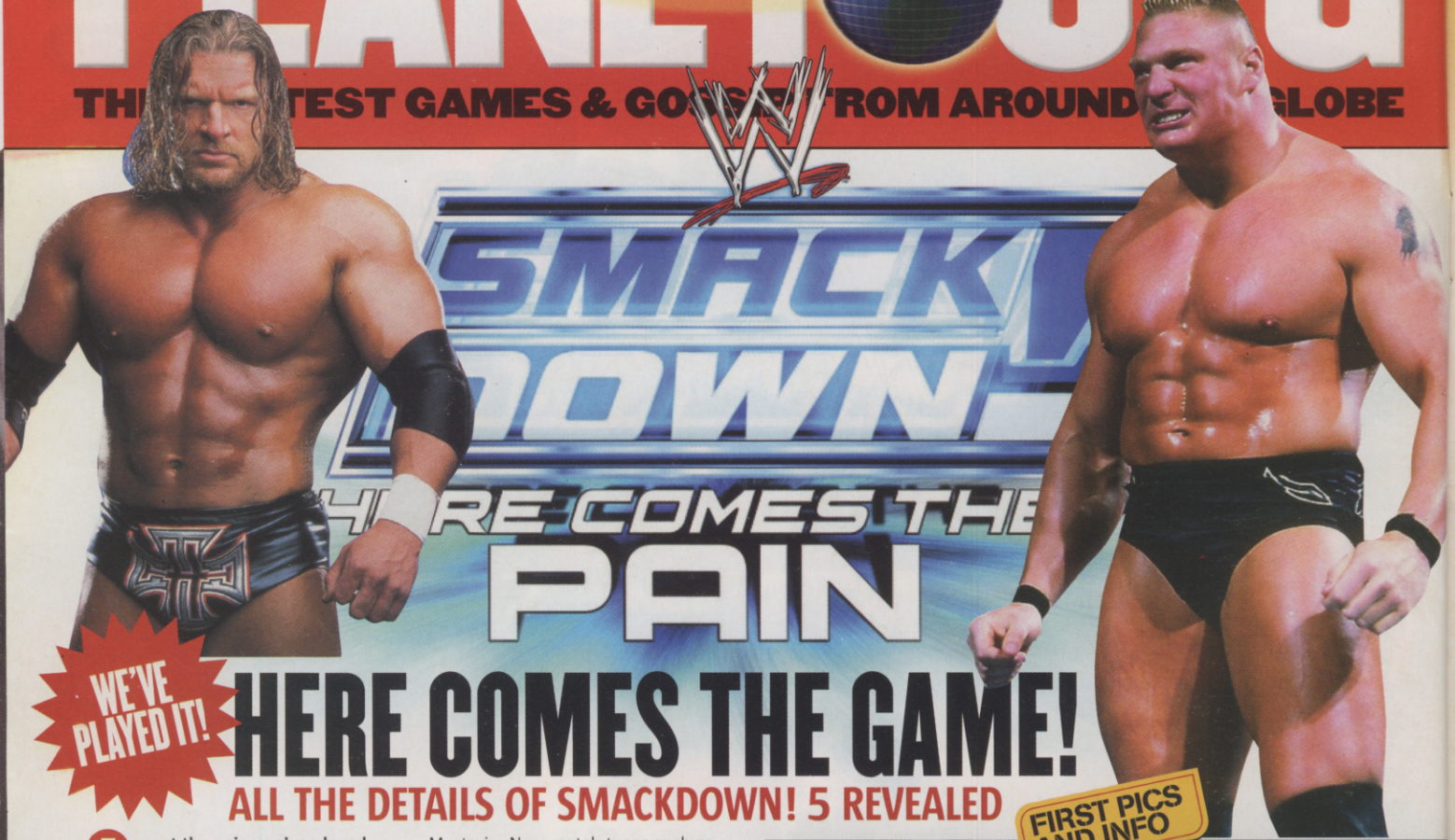
He's a cynic but we love him. Kind of

STOP PRESS RUMOURS ARE FLYING THAT CUBE'S SUCCESSOR IS CODENAMED N5 AND XBOX 2 IS GOING UNDER THE DEVELOPMENT NAME ACTIVISION, EA, CAPCOM, TAKE 2 AND THQ ARE BELIEVED TO BE WORKING ON PLAYSTATION 3 SOFTWARE. IT'S THOUGHT THAT

PLANET CVG

THE LATEST GAMES & GOSSIP FROM AROUND THE GLOBE



WE'VE PLAYED IT!

HERE COMES THE GAME!

ALL THE DETAILS OF SMACKDOWN! 5 REVEALED

FIRST PICS AND INFO

Forget the pain, we've played the game! THQ may have been later than usual in lifting the lid on its best-selling franchise, but don't panic, SmackDown! Here Comes The Pain will be in your PS2 by November.

With a list of improvements, new features and additions wider than Brock Lesnar's neck, this grappler promises to be another essential sequel in the award-winning series.

We spoke to Nick Wlodyka, creative director of WWE titles at THQ, about what we can look forward to come November. "Here Comes The Pain will be a game you want to play over and over," says Nick. "It now plays more like how matches are in reality."

LEGENDARY

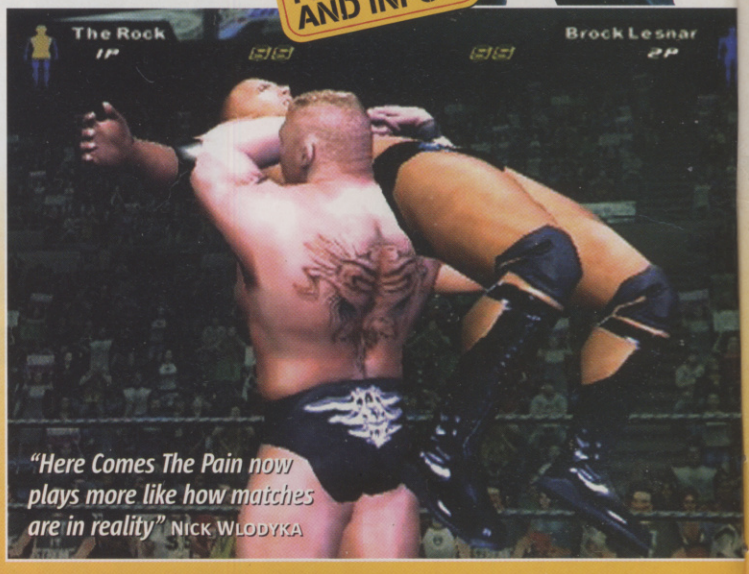
Here Comes The Pain boasts an updated roster of over 60 wrestlers including new additions to the series in the shape of Goldberg and Rey Mysterio. New match types such as the Elimination Chamber and Bra and Panties matches are in there, as is the reappearance of former WWE stars even, with 12 legends back in the mix without a hint of ring rust.

The identity of these 12 legends is being kept under wraps for now, but from playing an early build of the game we can confirm that Ultimate Warrior, Ted DiBiase, Animal and Hawk of The Legion of Doom are in.

NEW ABILITIES

By far the most important additions are the new grappling system and the way wrestlers now boast different abilities, which Nick says are "more in tune to real life ability".

Nick goes on to say, "We've modified the controls and added a new countering system. There are now four different grapples whereas before there was only one. We've



"Here Comes The Pain now plays more like how matches are in reality" NICK WLODYKA

MEET THE TEAM

THIS IS THE TEAM THAT MAKES THE MAG GREAT

Alex Simmons
EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- Advance Wars 2
- Winning Eleven 7
- Wario Ware

With the freshest hip-hop booming from his computer Alex is becoming CVG's answer to Westwood. He hasn't taken to shouting, "Let's set it off!" when he checks over every page of the mag yet, but we're counting the days. He's even tried to attach gold-plated rims to his scooter. Now that's bling.

Pete Walker
DEPUTY EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- Far Cry
- UFO: Aftermath
- Chaos Legion

Pete's on holiday this month, but unlike most people he hasn't gone to a warm and sunny place or somewhere quiet where he can put his feet up. No, he's actually zapped himself into the CPU of his PC and is riding light cycles and dodging tanks as we speak. Send us a postcard, Pete!

Georgie Kyriacou
PRODUCTION ED
CURRENT FAVES
- Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing EX
- Barbie Fashion Maker
- Garden Designer 1.1

With one word Georgie can reduce CVG's men to tears. She knows she has this power so she chooses her time carefully. When we're least expecting it she creeps up behind us and whispers in our ears "Copy?" Then she drifts off into the night, leaving weeping husks of men in her wake.

Lee Skittrell
REVIEWS EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- Pokémon Ruby
- Megaman Network Transmission
- Syberia

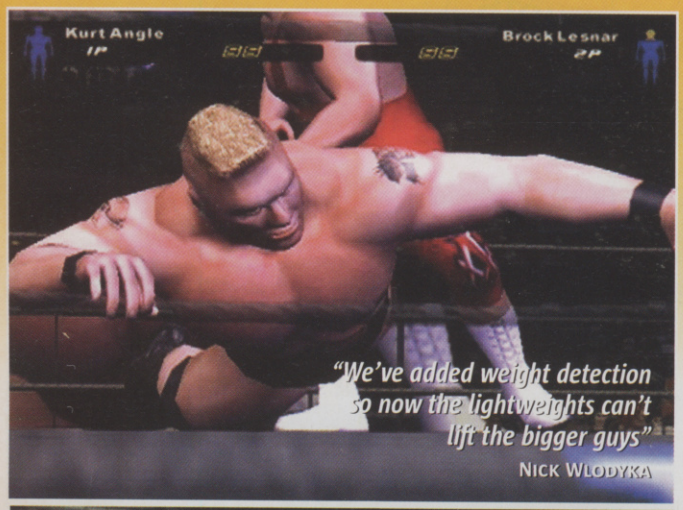
Lee came back from holiday looking so healthy that we thought a member of a new boy band had decided to join CVG. We were all practising our harmonies and dance routines when the bronzed Adonis turned to us and started talking about Blazikens and Pelippers. We're still confused.

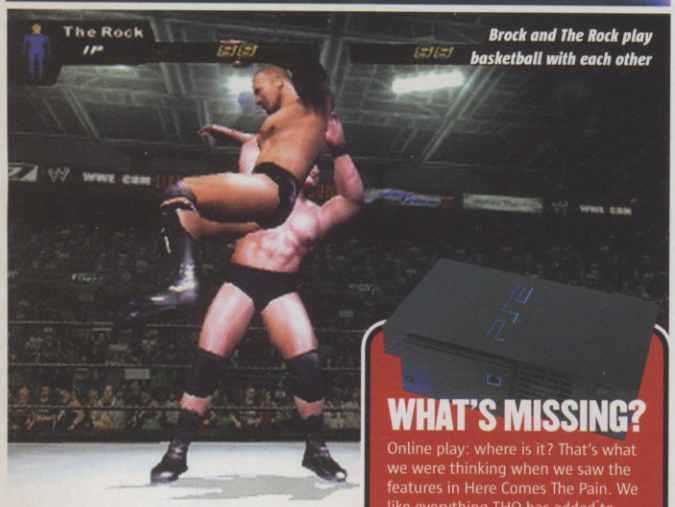
FLIP FOR EXCLUSIVE NEW SHOTS AND INFO

PES 3 SCORES

Find out all the latest on the new moves and features

MARIO 128, OUTRUN 2 & RESI OUTBREAK





Brock and The Rock play basketball with each other

added weight detection so now the lightweights can't lift the bigger guys – so no more Spike Dudley power-bombing Big Show.

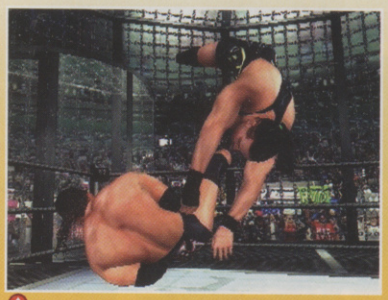
"There's also a new submission system with location-specific damage; head, arms, legs and body can be worn down, with superstars selling any injuries they may receive."

Other features to look out for include the reappearance of three-dimensional crowd, so no more wafer-thin cardboard cut-outs cheering you on. And cheer they will. Audibly the crowd now responds far more vociferously to the action, booing the heels and any underhand tactics and cheering big moves.

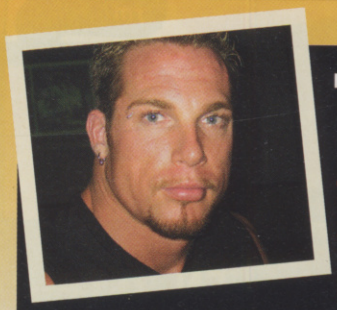
THQ claims it hasn't set out to improve SmackDown but to 'redefine' it. Each and every area of the game is seeing a complete overhaul based on fan feedback, a lot of it originating from you lot – good work, guys! CVG will be back with a full preview soon.

WHAT'S MISSING?

Online play: where is it? That's what we were thinking when we saw the features in Here Comes The Pain. We like everything THQ has added to make the title a progressive sequel, but online play is strangely absent with no plans for its inclusion. THQ has suggested that it has a few surprises up its sleeves, but will online play be one of them?



The crowd were growing so restless that they clubbed together to hurl the wrestlers into the ring



THIS IS THE TEST

WWE SUPERSTAR TEST TALKS BRA AND PANTIES WITH CVG

GAMES Do you ever play the SmackDown! games?
■ **TEST:** *Yeah, I have them all at home. They've evolved so much from the five years I've been here and from the first game I was in to now. They're so real-life now, down to the fans holding signs in the crowd, or the tattoos, or the colour of tape we use, exactly replicating the gear we use.*

GAMES It's scary.
■ **TEST:** *Yeah, it's really accurate.*

GAMES What character do you play as, other than yourself?
■ **TEST:** *Well yeah, I like to play as myself most of the time. Maybe if it's a Bra and Panties match I might pick a couple of chicks, but other than that I'm always myself. It's really spot on, right down to all the moves. They have moves in here that I don't even do anymore.*

GAMES Who is the biggest games player in the WWE?
■ **TEST:** *I'd say Booker T. He brings his PlayStation on the road, he has a portable PlayStation and he has his Game Boy with him all the time. Booker's a videogame master. Kane and Stevie Richards are two of the other guys that are always playing.*

GAMES In your real career, what's the worst injury you've sustained?
■ **TEST:** *I've got a cracked vertebra and three broken discs in my lower back. I've had that for over a year now, that's pretty nagging. Other than that I've had knee and elbow injuries. Just wear and tear on the body – you can't expect not to get injured. When you're bouncing around the ring all night like we are, for five nights a week, all year round with no off-time you're bound to get hurt.*

GAMES How do you find the schedule?
■ **TEST:** *It's really tough. People don't understand what we go through and how hard this really is. People think it's all glamorous, they see us on TV once a week and think that's it. But it's not. We wrestle five nights a week, we fly every day, we drive every day. Sometimes we come overseas. Like today: I'm over for 20 hours, I fly all the way back, land at midnight, the next day I'm on the road again. Sometimes you have to drive 400 miles in a night.*

GAMES So do you have a regular roommate on the road?
■ **TEST:** *I've got a couple of people I usually travel with. I'm pretty tight with everybody there, but I travel with Val Venis and Stacy most of the time. Stacy's a great girl. On TV we don't get along but behind the scenes she's a great girl.*

GAMES How is it feuding with someone you get along with?
■ **TEST:** *When it's your girlfriend it's great because you actually get to take a lot of frustration out on them. But it's all fun, it's just like playing make-believe when you're a kid.*

GAMES Who's the toughest opponent you've faced?
■ **TEST:** *I've had so many great matches. I'd probably have to put Shane over, Shane McMahon. I've had one of my better matches in my life with him, when I was doing that whole angle with Stephanie. That was probably one of my favourites.*

GAMES Were you happy with the resolution for that angle?
■ **TEST:** *Not really, I thought the ball was dropped on that, but I was new in the business too – that was my first year there so I couldn't have asked for a greater opportunity or story line. Did it end the way I wanted it to? No, but that's not really my doing.*

GAMES Was it a pretty tough thing getting your hair cut short?
■ **TEST:** *It really was. I didn't want to do it at first. It took a little bit of convincing but I did it and you know what? I'm so glad I did. I like it now, it's so much easier to take care of and every wrestler has long hair, it's so generic now, so passe.*

GAMES So you were the first! Were there meetings about getting it cut?
■ **TEST:** *Not really. I spoke to Vince McMahon about it a little bit. I've wanted to change, do something different. I thought Test as a character was getting a little stale, in the way I was, so I wanted to change what I wore in the ring and how I looked, so this is what we came up with. Vince and I wanted a change from the leather pants. He wanted trunks, I wanted shorts, you just develop into a way you're comfortable with.*

GAMES So you obviously don't have any problems about your legs like some of the WWE guys do?
■ **TEST:** *That's what Vince kept saying. He said, "I don't know why you cover up your legs, you have such big legs, you're hurting yourself by covering them up." But I'm comfortable wearing whatever.*

Mike Cooper
NEWS EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- Advance Wars 2
- Winning Eleven 7
- Wario Ware

Mike's been taking so many trips abroad to see the latest games that he's actually started to grow wings. He'll only eat meals from a small white tray with plastic cutlery and he keeps demanding that we fetch him cold beverages and a pillow. We'll learn him; we've attached fuses to his shoes!

Graeme Boyd
STAFF WRITER
CURRENT FAVES
- Indiana Jones And The Emperor's Tomb
- GTA Vice City
- Moving House

This is our new pet, Graeme, and we're teaching him to speak English. This is tougher than it sounds as we caught him in a remote part of Scotch-Land. We've already had to ban him from drinking whisky, wearing tartan and listening to David Sneddon. No, Graeme, put down the Rod Stewart!

Paul Davies
CONTRIBUTING ED
CURRENT FAVES
- Winning Eleven 7
- Pokémon Ruby
- Advance Wars 2

Paul went on the Highbury tour this month. Except he didn't have a ticket and pushed kids out of the way to get in. We're getting worried that football is taking over his life and that the spirit of the mad gamer is waning. Luckily Winning Eleven 7 turned up before he flat-lined off games forever.

Jaime Smith
ART EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- Winning Eleven 6: FE
- Winning Eleven 7
- The Legend Of Zelda: The Wind Waker

Remember that old cartoon Sport Billy? There's talk of a remake starring Jaime. He's so athletic and friendly he'd be ideal. He's always got shorts in his rucksack and usually has a moral to share with us at the end of the day, mostly that things would be so much easier if we did them his way. Sport Jaime!

Jenny McComb
SENIOR DESIGNER
CURRENT FAVES
- The Legend Of Zelda: The Wind Waker
- Pokémon Sapphire
- Wario Ware

Following recent fluffy escapades Jen decided to do an Aguilera and get dirrrty, pouring oil and grease on herself before going out. The look worked well for about a week, but then there was an explosion at the nearby pillow factory and she turned up the next day covered in feathers. How cute!

PES3 TM
PROEVOLUTIONSOCCER

THE BEST JUST GOT EVEN BETTER

Woo-hoo! We've finally got the first screens of one of the most eagerly anticipated games of the year, Pro Evolution Soccer 3!

As these images show, the best footie game on the planet is about to get even better with superior graphics and loads of other improvements too.

Pro Evo 3 boasts a new graphics engine that allows for the greatest level of detail yet seen in the series. Just check the soles of Beckham's boots. It's not only possible to see the studs, but also the rails on the boot the studs are attached to!

Add the fact that over 80 per cent of the animations in the game have been either reworked or replaced and you have not only a great-looking game of football, but one that now moves far more realistically than before. Players turn more smoothly and their runs are more fluid and far less angular.

It's also far easier to pick out the key players. Static screens only reveal the facial likeness, but once you see the game in motion it's easy to recognise the big players from the number of unique animations that emulate their real-life inspiration.

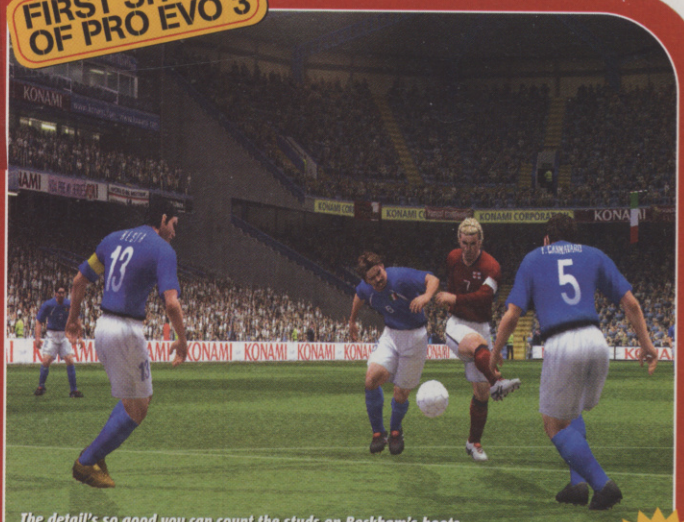
New ball physics make long-range shots more controllable and players will now be able to perform a variety of tricks such as a Cruyff turn and flicking a ball over a defender with the heel.

Two new features are visible during a match. The dots on the radar representing player positions now flash when a player is in space or able to receive a through ball. An icon also appears whenever the referee decides to play the advantage rather than the whistle being blown on every foul. Off the pitch the multiplayer mode now accommodates up to eight players, while the Master League now has four divisions and has been expanded to 64 teams.

There should be plenty of replay value, too, as points accumulated in the training and Exhibition modes can be spent on new stadiums, crowd effects, teams, players, strategies and even hairstyles. The challenge is on to keep up with Beckham's barnet.

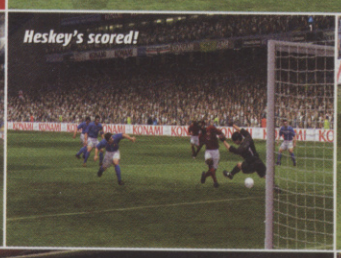
Watch out for the full preview with hands-on comments in CVG soon!

FIRST SHOTS OF PRO EVO 3

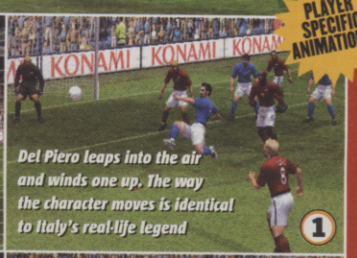

The detail's so good you can count the studs on Beckham's boots

Owen has unique animations that make moments like this even more life-like

From a distance it looks like the same old Pro Evo, but up close, wow!


Heskey's scored!

PLAYER SPECIFIC ANIMATIONS!


Del Piero leaps into the air and winds one up. The way the character moves is identical to Italy's real-life legend

Looks like Nesta has got the better of this cross

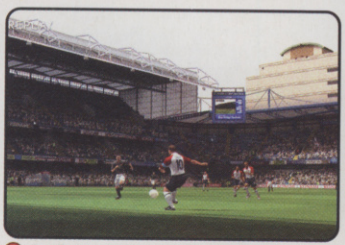
You'll immediately recognise his flamboyant style

Typical Italian showboating. You're going to love it!

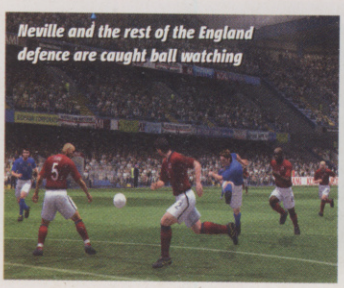
A SELL-OUT

It's not just on the pitch where all the improvements can be seen. Even the crowd has been given an overhaul.

If you're performing badly in the Master League Mode, spectators will now vote with their feet and stay away from matches, leaving empty spaces in the stands. They'll also dress appropriately for changes in weather conditions.


Surely England vs. Germany will sell out?

Look at the stands. There's no one there!


Neville and the rest of the England defence are caught ball watching

Just seconds before Heskey falls over, again

CAN YOU KICK IT?

NATIONAL PRO EVO LEAGUE IS COMING YOUR WAY

Make sure you're practising Pro Evo because once again Konami, GAME and CVG are gearing up to bring you the biggest organised game tournament the UK has ever seen. The National PES League will soon kick off in a competition that will run over the course of the real football season.

Like last year we're looking for the King or Queen of Pro Evo, and we want to proclaim one of *you* the UK Champion. Once we've found the best player in the country we'll follow your progress abroad as you face the top players on the Continent and take your skills to Europe.

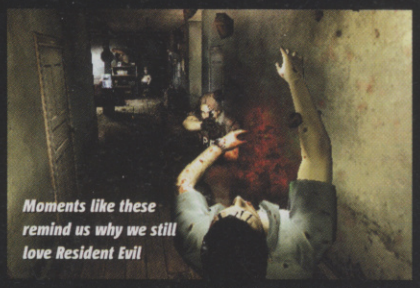
■ Keep reading CVG over the coming months for the big kick-off and details of how to register and enter.

GET INFECTED

New screens of Resident Evil Outbreak are turning up on our doorstep almost as regularly as the milkman makes his deliveries. This month's fresh batch show the most exciting innovation in gameplay the series has ever seen, infection!

As we've mentioned before, if you're bitten by a zombie in Outbreak you have limited time before the virus spreads through your blood and you become one of the creeping dead too. If you don't find a serum in time, prepare to get a craving for fresh blood and brains.

A small gauge appears in the corner of the screen if you become infected by a zombie bite and once the infection spreads to 100 per cent, any team-mates will need to watch their backs because your allegiance will quickly turn. The Outbreak hits PS2 next summer.

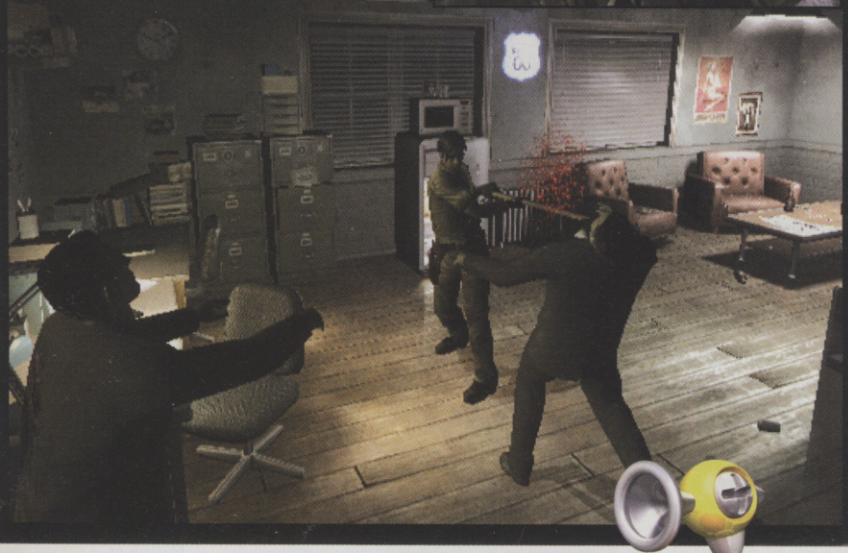


Moments like these remind us why we still love Resident Evil

PICTURE UPDATE

The environments are more detailed than ever

Making good use of nearby objects



FIRST SCREENS & DETAILS

The draw distance is far better! You can see for miles

OutRun 2

SEGA CLASSIC RETURNS

After years of rumour Sega has finally announced a sequel to one of the biggest hits in arcade history: Outrun is about to return.

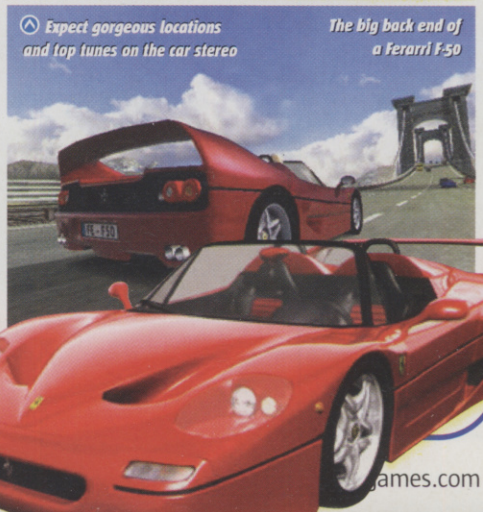
The feel-good racer sees you behind the wheel of a powerful Ferrari sports car, with a beautiful woman at your side and the not-so-open road ahead of you.

The original game boasted forks in the road at regular intervals, leading to different highways and endings depending on what route you took. The sequel repeats this formula. You can see the same five-tier branching system in the top right corner of this screenshot.

Outrun Mode will play the same as the arcade original. Also on offer are Time Attack, Versus Mode, where four players can race simultaneously, and Quest Mode. Here you choose a passenger to accompany you on your drive but you'll have to meet their specific requests during the race, which may be a preferred route or to drive at a required speed. By keeping your passenger happy you'll be able to enjoy a variety of different endings.

Currently in development for the arcades only, but running on the Xbox-based Chihiro board – so a conversion is inevitable, Outrun 2 is scheduled for release before the end of the year.

A beautiful girl by your side



Expect gorgeous locations and top tunes on the car stereo

The big back end of a Ferarri F-50

MARIO WON'T PARTY

NINTENDO KEEPS MARIO A SECRET

Mario 128 is so innovative that Nintendo is keeping it firmly under wraps. That's the word coming from the veteran developer, who, it appears, is getting a little tired of the competition stealing its ideas and incorporating them into their own forthcoming games.

CVG heard similar reports when Super Mario Sunshine was in development, with Nintendo refusing to divulge important gameplay details until shortly before the game's release.

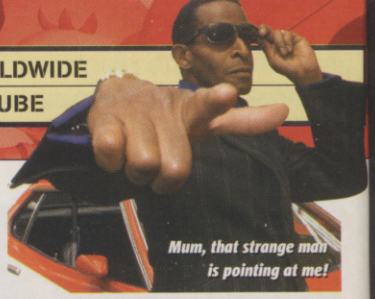
Thought to be the true sequel to the Nintendo 64 title Super Mario 64, Mario 128, if rumours are to be believed, will feature Mario and Luigi sporting a new look. The game is also thought to tie in somehow to the 100 Marios tech-demo that did the rounds when the GameCube technology was first shown. In this famous demo, the GameCube displayed 100 Marios on screen, all behaving independently of each other.

Unlike other titles that the company is only too keen to share with us, it appears the crown jewel in Nintendo's world gets the star treatment. The only details that Nintendo will divulge about the next Mario GameCube title is that it's definitely in development and will feature ideas that haven't been seen in games before. What teases! We'll surely find out more before the Japanese release at the end of the year.

STOP PRESS

SALES OF HALO: COMBAT EVOLVED ON XBOX HAVE REACHED THREE MILLION WORLDWIDE

NINTENDO IS ADDING THE HOP POWERSLIDE TO MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH ON CUBE



Mum, that strange man is pointing at me!

HUGGY'S BIG BUGGY

Antonio Fargas, aka Huggy Bear (ask your Dad), the pimpin' star of '70s TV show Starsky & Hutch (ask your Mum), recently visited London for a record-breaking publicity stunt to tie in with the release of the Starsky & Hutch game.

Lucky Antonio was shown a 30m-long sculpture of Starsky & Hutch's famous red and white Gran Torino car (ask your Dad again), made from over 5000 cardboard boxes. Once the cardboard erection was complete Antonio posed for photos with some lovely ladies and then went back home to count his dollars. Probably.

NINTENDO GRAB PIRATE BOOTY

Game Boy counterfeiters have been ordered by a Hong Kong court to hand over £641,000 to Nintendo for distributing devices capable of copying GBA cartridges.

Lik Sang International was the offending party and with the court case won it seems Nintendo shows no sign of slowing its anti-piracy drive. "These devices have been distributed to at least 30 countries around the world," says Jodi Daugherty, director of anti-piracy at Nintendo. "We will take all steps necessary to stop the manufacturing and distribution of counterfeit Nintendo products." Shiver me timbers!

SAY HALO TO MY LITTLE FRIENDS

File this one under 'strange but true'. Halo, the Xbox's premier action title was nearly – drumroll please – a *real-time strategy game*.

Yes, you read right. According to developer Bungie, Halo was at one stage of production a top-down strategy game where you commanded hundreds of units. Unlike other strategy titles at the time, Halo would also have the ability to command troops from the centre of the 3D action. Lucky for us that Bungie decided to abandon the idea and release Halo in the form that we know and love today.

STEALTHY FIRST PICS

FICTION BECOMES FACT

COUNTDOWN TO BLAST OFF

Fans of Metal Gear and Splinter Cell may want to keep an eye on Spy Fiction, the first title from new Japanese developer Access Games.

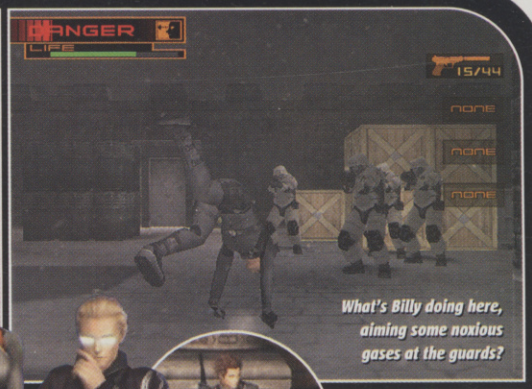
The company, formed by ex-employees of Konami and Sony developer Whoopee Camp, is already touting Spy Fiction as a Solid Snake beater. Well it would, wouldn't it?

The game centres on PHANTOM, a special forces team that undertakes top secret missions in the former Soviet Union and Middle East. PHANTOM members Billy Bishop and Sheila Crawford are sent to infiltrate a pharmaceutical research company when matters take a turn for the worse.

Expect action reminiscent of Solid Snake's and Sam Fisher's famous exploits, along with a few new twists. That chameleon-like camouflage suit already has us rather excited.

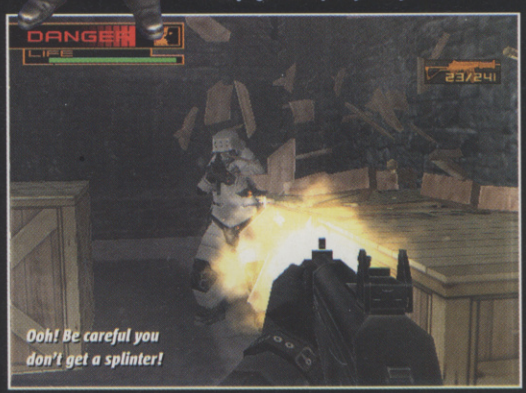
Spy Fiction is set for release this winter in Japan and no doubt a British release will be following shortly after.

Adopting the handy seagull-spotted-a-tasty-looking-fish pose

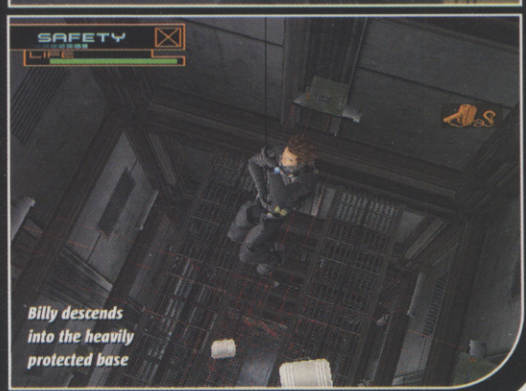


What's Billy doing here, aiming some noxious gases at the guards?

Now you see him... now you don't. That camouflage suit is pretty handy



Ooh! Be careful you don't get a splinter!



Billy descends into the heavily protected base

ADVENT CALENDAR

FIRST LOOK!

Mark Spring 2004 in your diary as the moment that Advent Rising is due. The Xbox exclusive is already looking very tasty and with prolific sci-fi novelist Orson Scott Card on board not only does it look good but it should have a gripping story line too.

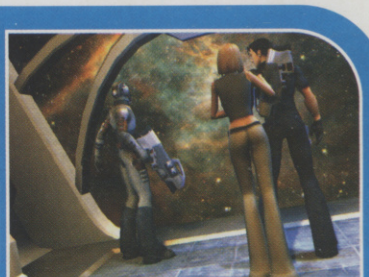
Orson has not only penned the complex script for Advent Rising but he's also writing a novel based on the adventure. It sounds like Advent Rising could be classic space opera, based around the inhabitants of the galaxy who believe human beings to be mythological creatures and one alien race the Seekers, travelling the galaxy trying to eradicate any trace of human society.

Step forward the player-controlled Gideon Wyeth, who may not sound like a hero, but he's a remnant of the last human outpost the Seekers are so desperate to remove.

Advent Rising is a third-person intergalactic adventure built using the Unreal Warfare engine. Could we finally have an Xbox title to rival Halo? We'll have to wait until next year to find out.

Hey, it looks like Halo... with quad bikes!

Gideon leads a lovely lady to safety. Doh!



Isn't this the end of The Empire Strikes Back?

HUNTING SEASON IS NOW OPEN

XBOX WORLD GAME OF THE MONTH — "Alongside Halo in the list of Xbox Shooters you simply must own" — 9/10

PSi2 — "Exceptional." — 9/10

PSW — "Mace Griffin is Halo for Playstation2. It's that good." — 9/10

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THE FORCE IS STRONG

Star Wars Galaxies: An Empire Divided has broken online records in the US. After a week on sale the massively multiplayer online (MMO) game had attracted over 125,000 users.

"The launch of Star Wars Galaxies: An Empire Divided was the single most successful introduction of an MMO to date," announced Simon Jeffery, president of LucasArts. "The game has broken all previous records for first week subscription totals, which bodes very well for the ongoing success of the game."

They went that-a-way!

To celebrate the achievement players were asked to commemorate the Star Wars holiday of Unification Day on July 4. Fireworks were launched in the game world at every hour to mark the event.

The development team plans to incorporate more future events into the Galaxies world as well as a variety of new features including player-owned ground vehicles and player cities so you can make like Lando Calrissian.

START YOUR MODEMS

Sega and Wow Entertainment are looking to rain on Gran Turismo 4's online parade by releasing Sega GT Online before the end of the year. The Xbox racer allows six players to race each other online and to trash-talk while they're doing it using Xbox Live's voice chat thingummyjig.

Sega GT Online features over 160 different motors, from vintage roadsters of the '50s, '60s and '70s, up to the latest concept cars. Offline challenges allow you to unlock new cars, parts and tracks.

Online players will be able to challenge each other, with extra incentives being placed on each race other than the thrill of coming first. Players will be able lay bets on the race outcome, or if you're feeling daring, you can even gamble your cars against competitors.

Don't stay at the back of the grid, put your foot down!

It looks just like Gra... Gran... what's that game called?

STAY AWHILE, STAY FOREVER

Gregory Horror Show is a bizarre new Japanese game that will be heading Europe-ward this November. Based on a short cartoon that goes by the same name, the game is set in a hotel run by a square-headed mouse called Gregory.

The idea of the game is to get out of the hotel, but of course, this being a game, it's going to be a little more taxing than simply trotting out of the front lobby.

On the run for stealing a soul

No, in order to leave you have to round up and collect the wandering souls that have been locked in the hotel with you.

Naturally, the other guests aren't keen on parting with their spirits, and you have to find their weak spots by solving puzzles and spying on other guests.

Time plays a big factor with the guests keeping to a schedule. Once you've collected a soul you'll have to stay on your toes, as the guests will give chase. You'll be damned to spend eternity in the hotel if you're caught. It sounds creepy and kooky, but it looks so cute!

What a blockhead! Sorry, had to be said

SPLINTER CELL 2 UPDATE!

Sam will have the same abilities plus plenty of new moves

THE SNAKE BEATER

Details of Sam Fisher's next adventure are shrouded in as much secrecy as his stealthy movements. But following on from last month's first look we've discovered some new details about Splinter Cell 2 that we thought we better share.

While Sam's first adventure was firmly rooted in urban Europe, Pandora Tomorrow begins with Sam having to infiltrate an Indonesian terrorist camp hidden in the tropical rainforest. Later levels see our hero traversing the globe. In one mission that really stood out for us, you have to board a submarine in a heavily guarded naval base.

Artwork for the Indonesian set mission

How the same scene will look in the game

Waiting in the shadows to sneak onto the submarine

Sorties won't be kept exclusively to the middle of the night, either. Levels set in daylight will offer new challenges, especially with the civilians who inhabit the locations. They can cause as many problems for Sam as a heavily armed terrorist.

Poking two fingers in the eyes of Solid Snake, Splinter Cell 2 will be the first stealth-based game to offer multiplayer online missions. Sam Fisher is out of action for the multiplayer game, simply because he always works alone. So a new cast of characters is being assembled for the multiplayer modes where you'll be able to play cooperatively or against each other in a deathmatch.

Ubi Soft claims it's keeping track of any new security developments in the real world that could be incorporated into the game. Don't expect any fantasy element to Sam's gadgets: this is a title that's firmly grounded in reality.

Our final piece of news is that Sam's goggles will have a number of cool new functions besides night and heat vision. All of the new gadgets are being kept firmly under wraps for the moment, but rest assured our spies are already at work to find out more.

Sam makes like Spidey

Multi-use goggles - we want some!

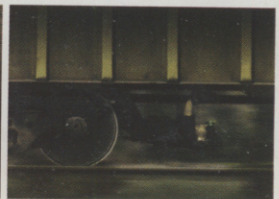
Reaching where most heroes can't

CHART ATTACK

CVG MOST WANTED

F-ZERO GX (GC)
Jaime: "Only a month till it goes on sale in Japan. I've already booked a flight to pick mine up by hand."

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 3 (PS2)
Paul: "The greatest game the world has ever seen. If I had to play one game forever, this would be it."

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND (PS2)
Alex: "I can play as me! I'm the star! Me, me, me! You can play as me too if you really want. Me!"

SPLINTER CELL 2 (XB, PS2, GC, PC)
Lee: "Online multiplayer sneak-me-do action. Should give Metal Gear Solid 3 a tough run for its money."

THE WARRIORS (PS2)
Mike: "I'm dying for a good fight. Gang-based warfare from the creators of Vice City should do the trick."

READER'S MOST WANTED

As you can see, Xbox fanatic Graham North likes using exclamation marks a lot!!! And he can't wait to stuff this bunch into his big fat beloved console.

1. HALF-LIFE 2 (XB) "I've seen a movie of it on the Internet. Nothing compares!!"
2. HALO 2 (XB) "The Covenant can jump onto your vehicles!! That's wicked!"
3. DOOM III (XB) "Never played the others, but the screenshots look amazing!!"
4. AMPED 2 (XB) "Amped was the best extreme sports game ever. Now it's online!!"
5. PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE SANDS OF TIME (XB) "I read CVG's preview last month and now I gotta get me some of that!!!"

Send CVG a photo of yourself and list of five games you're most excited about playing, plus 10 words on each telling us why.
READER'S MOST WANTED, CVG, DENNIS PUBLISHING LTD., 30 CLEVELAND STREET, LONDON, W1T 4JD. EMAIL: MAILBAG.CVG@DENNIS.CO.UK (SUBJECT: READER'S MOST WANTED)

CVG'S TOP FIVE SOUND EFFECTS

"Bruip, Bruip, BRUIP!" The triumphant sound of eating a mushroom in Super Mario Bros.

"Will!" Alert a guard in Metal Gear Solid on PSone or PS2 to trigger this heart-stopping noise.

"Da, Da, DA!" Victoriously pluck an object out of a chest in a Zelda game, and hold the item up to hear it.

"Bling!" That oh-so-satisfying jingle that you get from feverishly snatching up rings in any Sonic game.

"Wap, wap, wap" Fire off lasers in a Star Wars game and treat your ears to the finest laser sound effect ever.

GAME MULTI-FORMAT TOP SELLERS

1	Tomb Raider: The Angel Of Darkness	PS2, PC
2	Eye Toy: Play	PS2
3	SOCOM: US Navy Seals	PS2
4	Enter The Matrix	PS2, XB, GC, PC
5	The Sims: Superstar	PC
6	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	PS2, PC
7	Starsky & Hutch	PS2, PC, XB
8	Hulk	PS2, XB, GC, PC
9	World Championship Snooker	PS2, XB
10	Midnight Club II	PS2, PC

RELEASE DATES

GBA	SEGA SMASH PACK	AUG 01
PC	AMERICAN CONQUEST	AUG 01
GBA	RUGRATS GO WILD	AUG 01
PC	FIGHTER ACE	AUG 06
XB, GC, GBA	BARBARIAN	AUG 08
GBA	STUNTMAN	AUG 08
XB	DINOTOPIA	AUG 12
PC	FIRE POWER	AUG 12
PS2, XB	MACE GRIFFIN: BOUNTY HUNTER	AUG 15
PS2	INDIANA JONES AND THE EMPEROR'S TOMB	AUG 15
PS2, GC	GLADIOR: DEFENDERS OF THE OUTER DIMENSION	AUG 15
GBA	ROCK 'N' ROLL RACING	AUG 22
PS2, XB, GC	XGRA	AUG 22
GBA	TOP GUN COMBAT ZONE	AUG 22
XB, PC	PRO BEACH SOCCER	AUG 29
GC	P.N.03	AUG 29
XB	NEXT GENERATION TENNIS	AUG 29
GC	FUTURAMA	AUG 29
XB	THE GREAT ESCAPE	AUG 29
PC	RON 2.0	AUG 29
PC	COUNTER-STRIKE: CONDITION ZERO	SEPT 01
PC	BROKEN SWORD: THE SLEEPING DRAGON	SEPT 01
GC, GBA	STARSKY & HUTCH	SEPT 05
PC	COLD ZERO: THE LAST STAND	SEPT 05
PS2	MERCEDES-BENZ WORLD RACING	SEPT 05
GC	DISNEY PARTY	SEPT 05
PS2, XB, GC	THE ITALIAN JOB	SEPT 05
PC	RUGBY 2004	SEPT 05
PC	RAVEN SHIELD: ATHENA SWORD	SEPT 05
PC	CROWN OF THE NORTH	SEPT 09
XB	OUTLAW VOLLEYBALL	SEPT 12
PS2, XB, PC	JUDGE DREAD VS JUDGE DEATH	SEPT 12
PS2	BREATH OF FIRE: DRAGON QUARTER	SEPT 12
GBA	POLLY POCKET	SEPT 12
PC	LORD OF THE REALM 3	SEPT 12
PC	CONCORDE	SEPT 12
PC	BRIEFING TIME	SEPT 12
PC	WILDLIFE PARK	SEPT 12
GC	CONAN	SEPT 15
XB	RUN LIKE HELL	SEPT 19
PS2, XB, GC	TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA	SEPT 19
GBA	GOLDEN SUN: THE LOST AGE	SEPT 19
XB	GHOST RECON: ISLAND THUNDER	SEPT 19
GBA	BUKKAZOOM	SEPT 19
GC	DINOTOPIA: THE SUNSTONE ODYSSEY	SEPT 19
PS2	CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON	SEPT 25
PC	ESCHELON 2: IND WARRIORS	SEPT 26
XB	CURSE: THE EYE OF ISIS	SEPT 26
PS2, XB, GC, PC, GBA	THE HOBBIT	SEPT 26
XB	DISNEY'S HAUNTED MANSION	SEPT 26
PC	MASSIVE ASSAULT	SEPT 26
PC	HALF-LIFE 2	SEPT 30
PS2	DRIVER 3	SEPT
PC	POP IDOL	OCT 01
PC	YU-GI-OH: POWER OF CHAOS 1, 2, 3	OCT 01
GC	BULLETPROOF MONK	OCT 01
PS2	TEMPLAR	OCT 03
XB	FINDING NEMO	OCT 03
XB	GLADIATOR: SWORD OF VENGEANCE	OCT 03
GC	DISNEY PARTY	OCT 03
PC	MOH ALLIED ASSAULT BREAKTHROUGH	OCT 03
GBA	CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON	OCT 10
XB, PC	URBAN FREESTYLE SOCCER	OCT 10
XB, PC	XIII	OCT 24
GAMECUBE	WALLACE & GROMIT	OCT 28
GBA	HALLOWEEN	OCT 31
XB	DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS HEROES	OCT 31
GC	HARVEST MOON 2: IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	OCT 31
GBA	HARVEST MOON FRIENDS OF MINERAL TOWN	OCT 31
PC	BEYOND GOOD & EVIL	OCT 31
PS2	IRON STORM	OCT 31
PC	STAR WARS JEDI KNIGHT: JEDI ACADEMY	NOV 01
PC	MAX PAYNE 2: THE FALL OF MAX PAYNE	NOV 01
PC	RAILROAD TYCOON 3	NOV 01
PC	TOTAL CLUB MANAGER 2004	NOV 01
PC	WAR OF THE RING	NOV 01
XB	NBA JAM 2004	NOV 07
GC	TONY HAWK UNDERGROUND	NOV 07
PS2, GC, XB, GBA	PRINCE OF PERSIA: SANDS OF TIME	NOV 14
PC	WORMS 3D	NOV 21
GC, XB	BEYOND GOOD & EVIL	NOV 21
PS2	CONAN	NOV 26
PC	ALIAS	NOV 28
PC	SECRET WEAPONS OVER NORMANDY	NOV
PC	GLADIATOR: SWORD OF VENGEANCE	NOV
PC	CALL OF DUTY	NOV
PC	FAR CRY	NOV
PS2	TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES	DEC 01
GC	FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES	DEC
XB	AMPED 2	DEC

RELEASE DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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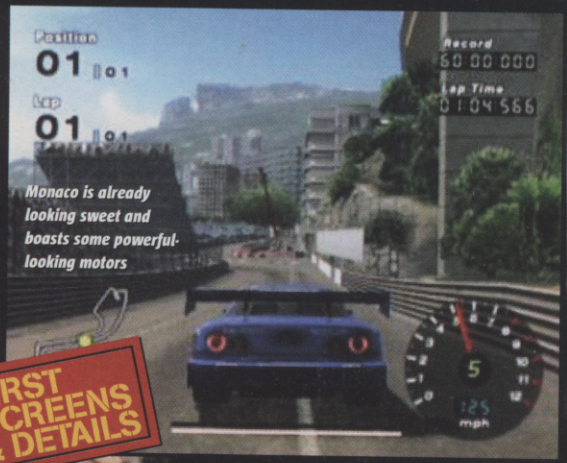
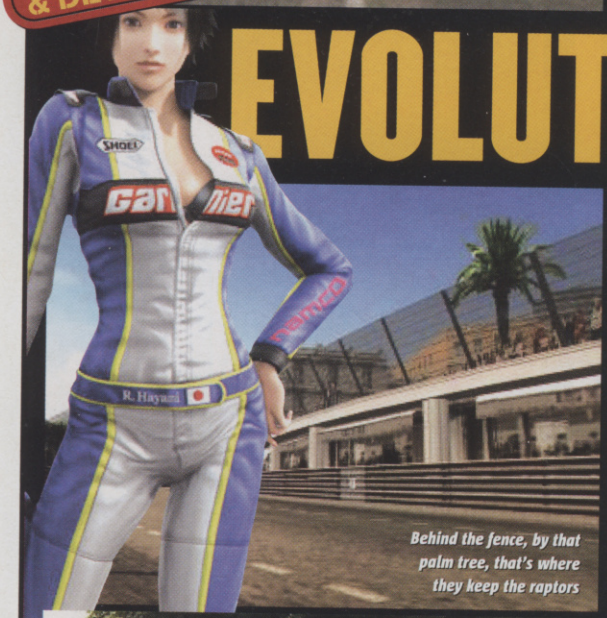


Monaco is already looking sweet and boasts some powerful-looking motors

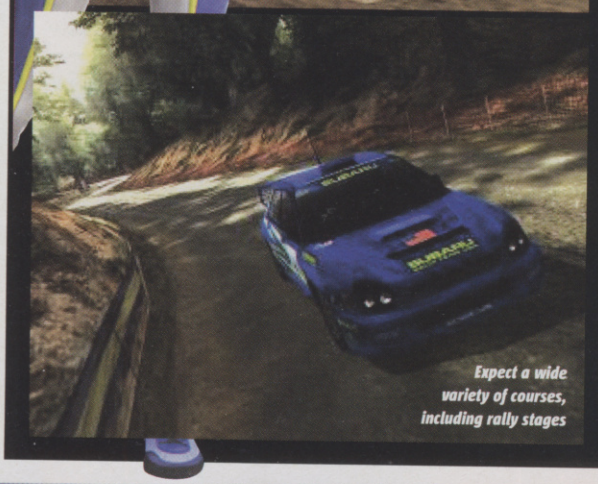
She's the only girl we've ever seen with a really big shiny helmet

FIRST SCREENS & DETAILS

EVOLUTIONARY RACING



Behind the fence, by that palm tree, that's where they keep the raptors



Expect a wide variety of courses, including rally stages

Namco is gearing up for the return of the famous Ridge Racer series with the fifth instalment of the popular racer set to appear on PS2, GameCube and Xbox before the end of the year.

R: Racing Evolution will feature licensed cars and a mixture of real-world and fantasy tracks including the legendary sun-drenched Monaco street circuit. Also included are eight different race types with circuit, rally and even drag racing all playing a part.

The Evolution development team has a long pedigree of racing expertise having already scored big with both the MotoGP series and of course, the previous Ridge Racer titles. This time out we're promised a few new features for the series. Die-hard fans shouldn't worry too much, though – you'll still be able to enjoy the usual Time Attack, Arcade and Versus modes.

The big surprise is the new Racing Life Mode. This places you in a competitive story about two female racers, Rena Hayami and Gina Cavalli. The heroine Hayami is a 22-year-old ambulance driver who is recruited to the Garnier Grand Prix race team. Cavalli, however, isn't a fan of the new arrival. The intense rivalry that develops spills over from the track with cinematic story sequences between each race.

The computer AI is also being improved. Namco claims their new Interactive Driver AI System will enhance realistic racing situations, reflecting the pressures drivers feel during real races. Your pit crew will also feature, and you'll be able to communicate with them during a race, as well as talking trash with rival drivers.

Details on R: Racing Revolution are being kept closely guarded, but we will bring you a full preview as soon as we're allowed to climb behind the wheel.

Rena Hayami receives some last-minute instructions

Meet John Craven and Trevor McDonald's funky love child

MAGNIFICENT SEVEN

Capcom's Killer 7 looks like being one of the most visually stunning games on the horizon.

Players take on the role of Harman Smith, an assassin who is struggling to live with seven split personalities. Not only will you have to keep control and master the abilities of Smith's multiple personalities, but you'll also be trying to stop an indiscriminate wave of terrorism that's plaguing the world.

Killer 7 is released on GameCube early next year so get ready to go schiz.

GBA GETS MUNCHIES

Those Oddworld inhabitants Munch and his sidekick Abe are making the pilgrimage from Xbox to GBA – Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee is about to be downsized.

THQ is currently working on the conversion. The story and gameplay should stay pretty much the same, with Munch and Abe leading a revolution to save their world from the greedy Glukkons.

Expect much chanting and farting when the game is released later this year.

● A SPECIAL SWORD OF MANA BUNDLE WILL BE SOLD IN JAPAN FEATURING A MANA BLUE GBA SP

RECURRING PAYNE

Fans of bullet time, rejoice. Max Payne is returning to a PC near you this autumn Max Payne 2: The Fall Of Max Payne.

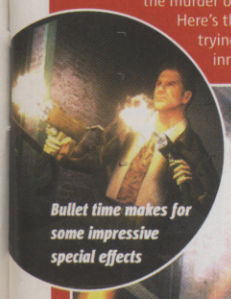
Original developer Remedy Entertainment is once again at the controls, this time promising new weapons, a longer script, more bullets and that funky device made famous by The Matrix – bullet time.

The action is set in New York City, with Max back in a police uniform but accused of the murder of his former partner.

Here's the twist: instead of trying to prove his innocence like last time around, in the sequel Max confesses to the murder! We don't think he'll be sent to jail though, especially as Max has attracted a love interest for the sequel – a lady that goes by the provocative name of Mona Sax.

The screens showcase the improved graphics engine with Max appearing far more human than before and losing the trademark scowl. We're been told that the engine has been reworked, with improved physics and no more of that awful clipping that spoilt all the good bullet-time work in the original.

Max Payne 2: The Fall Of Max Payne is pencilled in for a PC release later this year.



Bullet time makes for some impressive special effects

The streets are alive with the sound of bullets

FIRST LOOK!

MAX PAYNE IS BACK!

POCKET PEOPLE

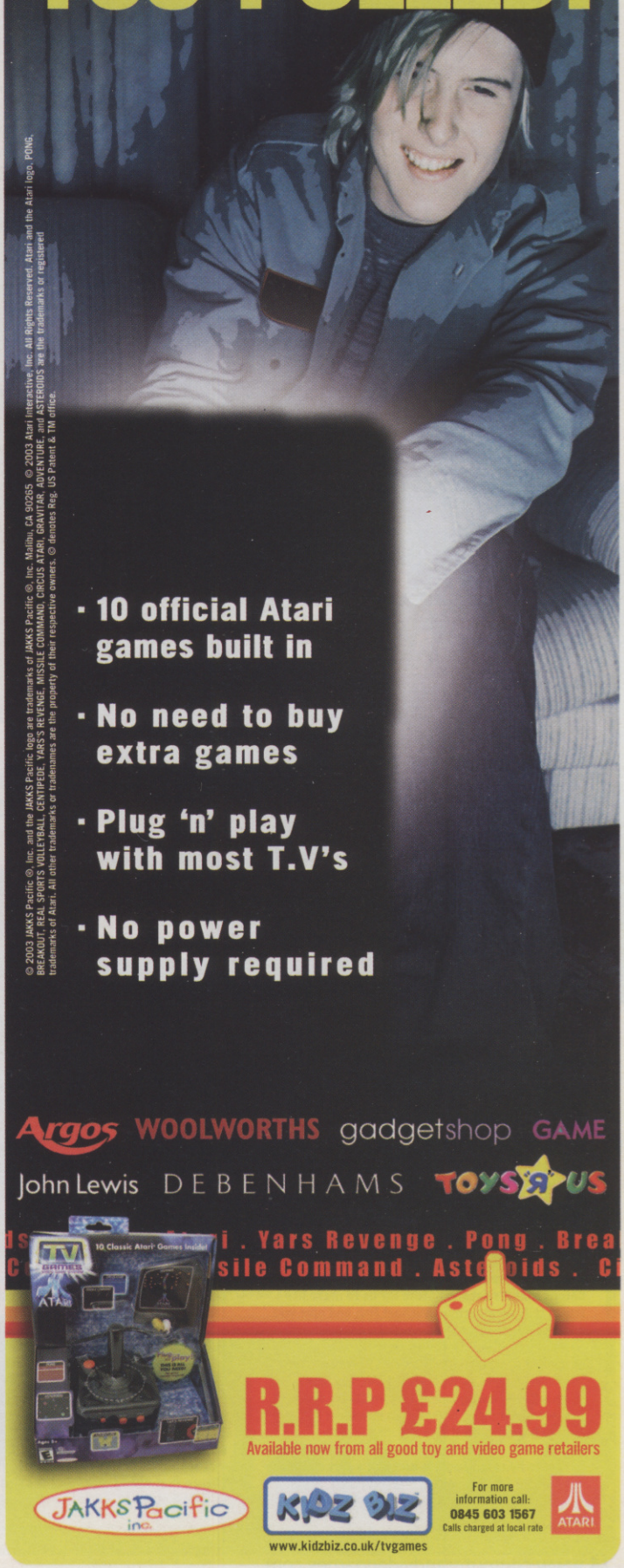
Not content with dominating the PC charts, The Sims are preparing for another round of console activity this winter with The Sims Bustin' Out. One format we didn't expect the phenomenon to reach, however, is the Game Boy. Well, obviously EA has no such worries, having squashed their mini stars to truly portable dimensions.

The GBA version of Bustin' Out allows you to create a unique Sim. You can choose from a number of different careers as you move from barn living to a swanky mansion. Over 30 exclusive characters populate the GBA neighbourhood, so there'll be plenty of opportunities for romance and pant-wetting. You're even able to adopt a pet!

Instead of ordering from a catalogue, items for your home are now gathered by trading and visiting stores. Best news for Nintendo and Sims fans is that the GBA and GC versions of Bustin' Out will link up to unlock special items. These include a secret area in the GBA version and mini-games that earn you Simoleans on the GC.

Sims fans will have another battle with their addiction this December.

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU PULLED?



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STOP PRESS TV BATMAN STAR ADAM WEST AND X-FILES MYSTERY MAN DAVID DUCHOVNY ARE PROVIDING VOICES FOR XIII
A JUSTICE LEAGUE GAME STARRING ALL DC COMIC'S MIGHTIEST HEROES WILL BE RELEASED BY MIDWAY IN 2004

SO FAR, SO GOOD

Two minutes playing Crytek's near-future shooter Far Cry convinced us of two things – that the free-roaming tropical exteriors are some of the lushest and largest we've come across, and that we like what we see. Out November on PC, next year for Xbox. More soon.

Set in 2020, you play Jack Carver, and like in Half-Life, Wolfenstein (and indeed XIII) you have no idea what's going on at the start. Banged up in the hull of this rusting aircraft carrier, a mysterious friend loosens your bonds...

Sneaking out is an option, but finding a machete, one guard later you also have a pistol. You pause to admire impressive visual effects like a swinging light casting patterns on escaping steam...

Some handy binoculars detect sound, alerting you to guards at the dock. You can sneak ashore there or swim to a nearby cove where you'll find this buggy

...and resist the urge to look for a good spot to catch some rays the first time you come out on deck. The water looks real. The beach looks beautiful. You're in a freaking holiday brochure, complete with butterflies

SCENIC FIGHTING
AW, SUNSET ON THE BEACH. BREAK OUT THE COCKTAILS AND THE HAND GRENADES. YOU CAN EVEN BLOW CRATERS IN THE GROUND AND DUCK INTO THEM FOR COVER. TAKING OUT SQUAD LEADERS WILL BREAK UP COORDINATED ENEMY ATTACKS WHILE ICING RADIOMEN WILL PUT THE KAIBOSH ON REINFORCEMENTS

JUNGLE WRECKING
FREE TO EXPLORE THE VAST TROPICAL ISLANDS FOR ALTERNATIVE ROUTES OR USEFUL EQUIPMENT. YOU'LL STUMBLE ACROSS WWII WRECKAGE FROM DOWNED PLANES TO CRUMBLING GUN BUNKERS. NOT ONLY DOES IT HELP SET THE SCENE AND ADD ATMOSPHERE, BUT IT MAKES YOU FEEL CRYTEK ACTUALLY WANTS YOU TO GO OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

SURROUNDED
FOR SOME REASON THESE MERCENARIES ARE AFTER YOUR BLOOD. THEY'RE FREE TO REACT TO HOWEVER YOU CHOOSE TO TACKLE THE MISSION, OFTEN ACTING AS A UNIT AND LIKE YOU THEY USE THE COVER OF THE IMPRESSIVELY THICK JUNGLE TO MANOEUVRE, MAKING FIREFIGHTS LESS PREDICTABLE...

SLEEPING LIONS
...ALTHOUGH THE END RESULT USUALLY LOOKS LIKE THIS. RAGDOLL PHYSICS MEAN NOT ONLY DO ENEMIES FALL REALISTICALLY, BUT THE FORCE OF IMPACTING BULLETS MOVES THEIR BODIES ACROSS THE FLOOR, OVER CLIFFS, ROUND CORNERS... NOT THAT WE SPENT 10 MINUTES SHOOTING TWITCHING CORPSES OR ANYTHING

SEEING IN THE DARK
YOU CAN ONLY CARRY A FEW WEAPONS AT ONCE (PLUS COOL GADGETS), FORCING YOU TO MAKE TACTICAL DECISIONS. BAG A SNIPER AND NAB HIS WEAPON AND YOU'LL BE IMPRESSED BY THE SCALE OF LEVELS THE FIRST TIME YOU ZOOM IN. TROUBLE IS, ENEMIES ALSO HAVE SCOPED WEAPONS – THAT INCOMING MISSILE WAS FIRED FROM THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER ON THE HORIZON

HAWAIIAN TROPIC
FAR CRY ISN'T ALL PO-FACED SHOOTING. IN ONE HUMOROUS MOMENT AT THE END OF THE FIRST MISSION, JACK SETS A TIMER FOR A MASSIVE EXPLOSION, ONLY TO DISCOVER IT HAS A VERY SHORT FUSE. ONLY ONE THING TO DO – RUN... OR YOU'LL BE CONSUMED BY A WALL OF FLAME, MISSING A CLASSIC CUTSCENE MOMENT

SOFT ON SHOOTERS

Not that we're getting paranoid or anything, but they're out to get us. Who? Shooters. They're everywhere, scoping in on us, aching to drill a hole clear through our wallets.

Having sent Will Rock on a suicide mission, Ubi Soft is left with what's shaping up to be a crack squad in its employ. We'll be bringing you a full dossier on its multi-format cel-shaded shooter XIII next month, but for now we've got three of the publisher's most promising recruits on parade for you to inspect. And the good news for gamers with a predilection for outsized consoles is they're all looking rather... X-y.

NEW PICS LATEST INFO

TOM HAS TRIPLETS

Here at CVG we're so at one with our Wind Waker batons that it's second nature for us to make like crusty telly weatherman Michael Fish and give you some predictions for this autumn.

You'll have Red Storms in early October and November, starting with Thunder but ending with a Rainbow. Okay, okay, we'll spell it out. Ubi Soft's releasing two new squad-based Tom Clancy shooters with weather-related names from developer Red Storm, and we have the latest pics and info.

The new Xbox-exclusive Rainbow Six 3 title's name has yet to be confirmed but isn't just a port of already-released PC Raven Shield as first rumoured, and shouldn't be confused with that game's expansion pack Athena Sword. A month or so later, Xbox is also getting Ghost Recon's stand-alone post-Castro-era campaign disc Island Thunder.

The game's been pumped up and reworked since the PC release and the Xbox original, and is rammed with Live content, something we presumably can't say for the PS2 version out around a month later. We've had a bash and it's going to give the original a run for its money for the title of Best Xbox Live shooter.

All that's left to do is throw in a multi-format sequel to Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell, and even the mathematically challenged can see there's a fair chance that one or all of old Tom's triplets will be out on a console near you soon.

UNCLE TOM COBBLY'S FACTOIDS

Tom Clancy's RAINBOW SIX 3

- The globetrotting plot takes anti-terrorist Team RAINBOW from the Cayman Islands to Rio de Janeiro as they attempt to stop another nutter unleashing the end of the world
- Streamlined Live play plus 'enhanced' real-time order system and voice-activated commands. Question is, enhanced what, given this is Xbox's first Rainbow Six game?

Rainbow Six: sign up, see the world and shoot people? Sounds just like joining Team CVG

Tom Clancy's GHOST RECON ISLAND THUNDER

- Improved graphics, cool lighting effects that mimic the way your eyes adjust when entering a dark room and better sounds
- Eight-mission one-player and five multiplayer maps from PC, three Desert Siege and four fan ones for Live play, plus 16 one-player and 17 multiplayer maps
- Multiplayer modes include Last Man Standing, Hamburger Hill, Sharpshooter, Firefight and Recon

Island Thunder: some sort of curry-related incident? Puts a new spin on the Cuban missile crisis

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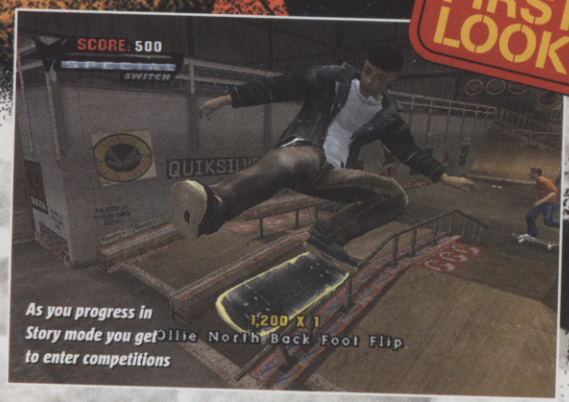
TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND

FIRST LOOK!

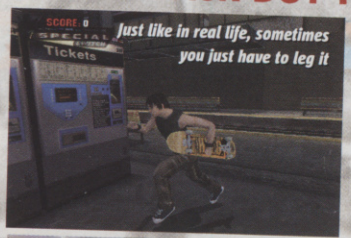
T.H.U.G.



As you progress in Story mode you get to enter competitions

HE'LL MAKE YOU FAMOUS

TONY'S BACK BUT THIS TIME YOU'VE GOT TO BE IN IT TO WIN IT!



Just like in real life, sometimes you just have to leg it

Customisable boards, skaters, levels, tricks, challenges... everything!

Prepare yourselves for the most brutal Tony Hawk game yet. Well, why else do you think they're calling it THUG?

In full it's Tony Hawk's Underground, THUG for short. That's the name of the fifth instalment in the most successful skating series on the planet. Neversoft has decided to ditch the Pro Skater tag and number after the title in an attempt to refresh the series and also to remove the creative shackles. Does it work? This is one of the most tantalising sequels we've ever seen, so yes.

GET CREATIVE

In Story mode once you've secured sponsorship you are rewarded with another cool new feature – the ability to design your own board.

By mixing different graphical elements and colours you can create unique designs. Nice!

DO ANYTHING!

Underground features some radical departures from previous games. For the first time you'll be able to get off your skateboard and go exploring. Why would you want to do this? Well, to find new areas or new buildings to trick off.

In THUG you can climb ladders, hang from ledges and wires and shimmy to greater heights, just like Lara Croft. Getting off your deck also means you can perform a greater variety of tricks and transfers with running starts, enabling you to pick up greater speeds before you hop back onto your board.

BE YOURSELF!

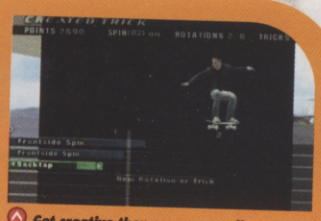
The famous line-up of skating superstars is returning in THUG, with Tony Hawk, Bob Burnquist, Chad Muska and Buckey Lasek confirmed so far. More importantly, Underground will also star someone *extra* special – you.

For the first time you can physically appear in Tony Hawk's universe. Not by creating a lame skater with different body parts, but by putting

GET SOME NEW MOVES

Another new feature for THUG is the ability to make your own tricks.

Using a simple key-framing interface you can modify the animation of a skater and then give the move a name. You'll be able to store six created tricks and PS2 players will be able to share their creations with other players online.


Get creative then come over all generous and share your tricks

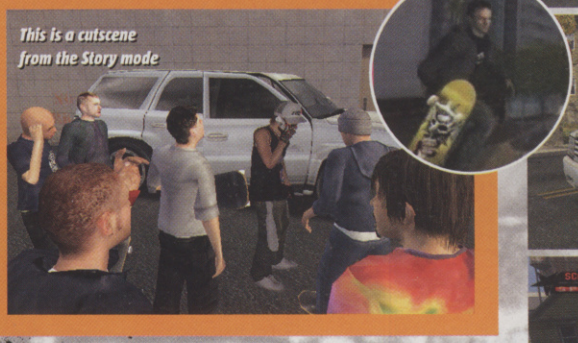
Look at the realism in those clouds – it's a good-lookin' game

Count how many places you can slide in this single screen!

SO LONG PRO SKATER

The reason why the Pro Skater part of the title is gone is because THUG places the emphasis on you and not on Tony Hawk.

All the previous Hawk games have had a Career mode with goals set for the pros. THUG boasts a Story mode where you're working your way towards becoming a pro from the bottom. That's why it's about the Underground, ya'see?



This is a cutscene from the Story mode

ALMOST FAMOUS

Creators Neversoft interviewed a bunch of pro boarders, asking them to tell the stories of how they got their breaks into the skateboarding hierarchy.

These tales were then incorporated into THUG's Story mode.

GO CRAZY!

Along with the ability to star in Tony Hawk's Underground, Activision promises that there will be far more customisation options in the game. Create a Skate Park will be greatly expanded, allowing you to be far more adventurous with your designs.

You also get to set all the different challenges yourself, not just in your own created levels, but also in any level in the game.

Remember before how once you completed all the challenges on offer there wasn't much reason to pick up a pad and replay? That's set to change with you now able to constantly modify the tasks on each level, moving the SKATE letters to harder-to-reach places or by creating new gap transfers; the choice is yours.

It seems THUG is offering greater freedom than any of the previous Tony Hawk games. In fact, from what we've seen so far it almost feels like an adventure game. Throw in a Story mode where you have to complete certain tasks GTA-style and THUG is shaping up to be one of the greatest sequels ever.

The good news for everyone is that it's reaching these shores in November, and it's on all formats. PS2, Xbox, GameCube and GBA owners should snap this one up fast because it's going to cause a revolution. We'll bring you more very soon.

your own face on your skater! Yep, your ugly mug!

At the moment it's unclear if this feature will use Sony's Eye Toy camera. We do know that you can send a digital photo to developer Neversoft, after which an automated system converts it into a file that's understood by the PS2. It's then posted online for you to download into the game using your user name and password. Bingo, you're in the game!

GOT THE TIME

Apparently time will play some sort of part in THUG. We're not sure how but all the levels can be played during the day or night.

Will this be a switchable option or will time simply pass as you're in each level? If it's the latter, could this have a bearing on unlocking certain areas or trigger events? We'll soon find out.

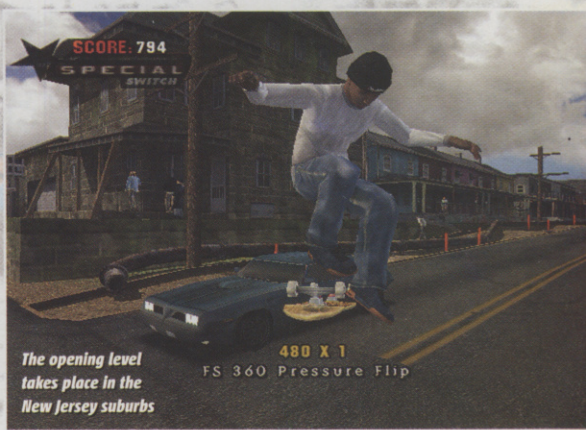
ALL-NEW SCREENS

Heaven is a halfpipe and a spot of smooth tarmac

The car driver couldn't resist stopping to ask where that T-shirt came from

Just imagine your face attached to that body - it could be so beautiful

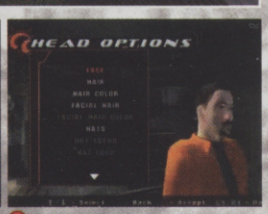
You can explore more and get to more diverse areas by going on foot



The opening level takes place in the New Jersey suburbs

No ramps to get you higher? Then dismount, grab your board and climb up instead

Download your photo into the game from the Internet



Optional authentic skater facial hair won't enhance performance

DRIVE, SHE SAID

Not every new element in THUG has been met with a "Hell, yeah". We're baffled by your new ability to drive cars.

Why would we want to do that when we can perform all number of insane tricks on a skateboard? Oh well, if you want to drive a car, in THUG you can... happy?

Lime green... nice

Remember it's not a board

YU-GI-OH! UK CHAMPIONSHIP

NEW YORK CITY HERE WE COME

■ **PLACE:** ThinkTank, Millennium Point, Birmingham
■ **DATE:** 5 July 2003
■ **PRIZE:** Chance to represent the UK in the World Championships, New York City

Here at CVG we don't issue a challenge unless we mean it.

When we tossed down the spiky office gauntlet (normally kept safe under Alex's desk) to the nation's growing army of Yu-Gi-Oh! Duelists and invited them to show off their battling chops, well, we never dreamed that the response would be so huge.

The cards and games have only been out a few months here, so we were amazed to see how many CVG readers had managed to build up impressive collections. The high-tech ThinkTank centre in Birmingham went Yu-Gi-Oh! crazy for the day, with bemused relatives relegated to a Parents Crèche while their offspring swapped cards and talked tactics before getting down to the business of battling.

Between bouts we managed to grab a few words with some of the competitors who were keen to talk about their passion for Yu-Gi-Oh! Some of them even told us how much they loved CVG. We're still blushing now...

"I've been playing the card game for about three months, and I've got the same deck on my GBA so I can practise with it. I love battling with the cards. It's something collectable, something that everyone can play."
Lucas Eaton

"I've been collecting since just after Christmas and I've got 1500 cards. Me and my friends are highly competitive – we try and get one up on each other."
Ben Ward-Geddes

"We've been playing since Easter. We like the collecting – that's the nice bit – and the fighting. The Masked Beast is the best card, but it's American, so it's not out here yet."
Ben and Dom Bareford

And everyone's favourite card? Blue-Eye White Dragon, of course!

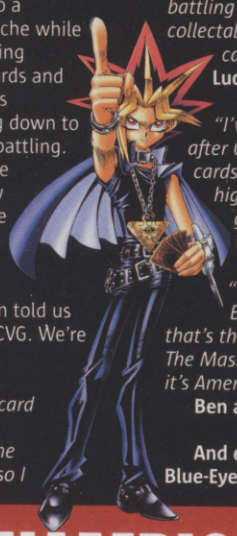
He might be a nipper but the kid means business

Not all the parents were sent to the crèche – just most of them

Ben and Dom Bareford have been playing since Easter

Finalists Suraj Patel and Michael Ryback flash some of their fave cards

With the duel tied at 1-1, Michael starts to look worried



TRADING CARD CHAMPIONSHIP

There were an incredible 160 entrants in the Trading Card Game Championship, all using only official UK decks rather than the more expensive American imports.

Sixteen groups of eight players battled over three rounds until only the final 14 Duelists remained. The finale was played out on a big screen so that everyone could gather round and watch the drama unfold.

The happy face of a winning Duelist – on his way to NYC courtesy of CVG and Konami

GBA CHAMPIONSHIPS

It's high noon in the ThinkTank (well, 10:30 in the morning actually but that doesn't sound quite so dramatic).

Twenty-four Duelists face off across the table-tops, their GBAs linked together as they battle through the best of three rounds in the GBA Yu-Gi-Oh! Worldwide Edition.

Playing at a breakneck pace, the hopefuls were soon whittled down to four semi-finalists, before the ultimate showdown...

1 The semi-finalists eye up their prizes before getting down to battle for the big one

2 The tense final Duel, played out between Ashley Brown and Christopher Kirkham

3 Winner Christopher will now go forward to represent Britain in the World Championship in New York. He takes our hopes with him...

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My skateboard was fantastic. I had a Santa Cruz deck and Tracker trucks with lime green Kryptonic wheels. The 65mm ones. My auntie lived out in California so she bought it for my birthday. But she sent it surface mail and it took ages to come. It seemed like months but it was probably only a couple of weeks. And then the first time I went out on it I came off and knackered my Reebok trainers. I tried to get another pair the same but they'd stopped doing them. Typical.

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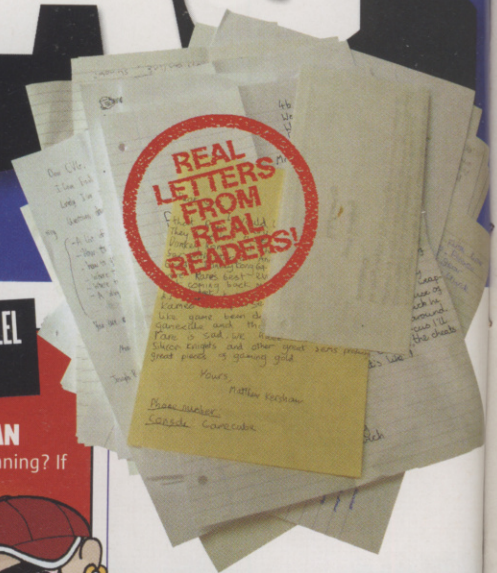
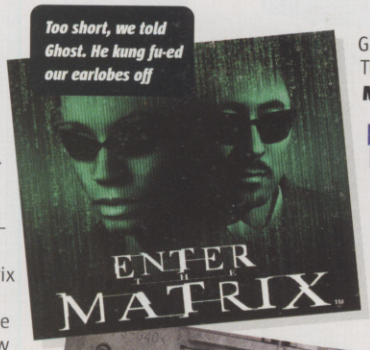


Send your rantings and ravings (or a letter) to: Mailbag, CVG, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1T 3JD or email us at mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk

ALL TOOOO EASY

I recently bought two PS2 games, Enter The Matrix and The Mark Of Kri. These have both been good games but seem too short – I completed Kri in three days and Matrix in two. In the future could you please give a warning about how long a game takes to complete.

Josh, via email



Too short, we told Ghost. He kung fu-ed our earlobes off

LENS FLARE-UP

I've owned a PS2 since March 2001 and was very happy, however five months after my warranty ran out I started experiencing problems loading games. I sent it off to be fixed, but the lens had burnt out. Sony told me I had to pay an extra £60 to get it fixed. This enraged me – I had paid £370 [*presumably on import* – Ed] for a console that had only lasted me only one year, five months. I'm writing this to inform people about this problem.

Ben, via email

CVG *You didn't mention if you'd been playing it 24/7, in which case it's more likely to wear out sooner. Anyone else had similar problems?*

Eye spy with my little lens... not a lot, if you haven't got £60, Ben

KING ME.ROOL

Just thought I'd let you know that Zelda rules. So do Nintendo and me.

Paul, via email

CVG *Rubbish. Zelda rules, and so do we.*

Yu-Gi-Oh! is to blame for a hike in London's homeless

CYNICAL, ME?

Am I the only one who sees that although Nintendo has recently been fined £90 million for price fixing, they continue to bleed us dry, making us pay for much the same hardware four times! Here they are: SNES, GBA, GBA:SP, GBA player. This is a rip-off!

Marc, via email

IS THAT A PSP IN YOUR POCKET?

Looking at the specs for Sony's so-called handheld, I can't help feel they've missed the point. It looks like it will break the essential rules of being portable: to fit in your pocket without making your eyes water, and they have to be affordable. I can't see the average Joe wanting to pay £200-plus for something that has ten functions he does not want.

Michael, Nottingham

GUILTY GEAR

On page 67 of Issue 261 you had an advert for the Yu-Gi-Oh Championships. You said that Yugi has never been defeated in a duel, but the truth is he actually has. He was beaten by his arch rival, Seto Kaiba, while they were in Duelist Kingdom. You also said that the most powerful card is the Blue Eyes White Dragon, when it is actually Exoida The Forbidden One. Apart from this, your mag is great.

Deathblade, via email

CVG *Apologies. As you say, it was an advert for the event, but still no excuse for sloppiness. We've sacked the writer responsible so now he can't pay his rent and is moving all his gear into a cardboard box down the Embankment in London. In fact, he has a pitch right next to Mike's.*

LETTERS FROM A PARALLEL MAGAZINE UNIVERSE...

DAN AND DOUBLE DAN

Is "Spot The Dan" still running? If it is I have found him. He is on pages 3 and 25 of Nintendo Official Magazine. Go me.

Captain Voodoo

Can you Spot The Dan in this issue of CVG?

PSP ≠ GBA RIP

Why are you getting so excited about the PSP? Granted, the games were good when they first came out, but does anyone really want to pay £30-£40 for a vaguely modified PlayStation game that they could pick up for a fiver on eBay (if they haven't already got it)? I think it's a little early to be declaring 'Game Boy RIP'.

Jack, via email

PSP – will it make your eyes water?

SOLID THEORIES

MGS3 set in the past – is Kojima off his head? The end of MGS2 is where the story gets really interesting, and now it seems we won't get filled in till probably 2006 or later. So I need all the info you have. What happens to Raiden and Ocelot? Are the Patriots really a huge super-computer that runs the country, as I suspect?

Mike, Bristol

While reading last issue's article on Metal Gear Solid 3, I noticed that it was supposed to be set in the 1960s. How can this be as Sons Of Liberty was set about 40 years later and Snake has hardly aged? Isn't the character that we saw in your screens more likely to be Big Boss? I think this is possible as he and Snake should look similar if they are genetically identical.

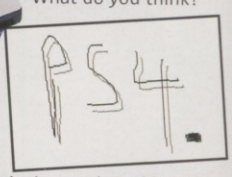
Adrian, London

CVG *Theories abound on this one, but that's all they are right now, though Snake Eater is about the origins of Snake so anything is possible. Conspiracy theorists (ie anyone who bought into MGS2's plot) might note that the teaser trailer said 'Only The Snake Is The True Hero'. Is that a typo or could 'The Snake' refer to something other than Snake himself? The plot thickens...*

TOP SEECRAT

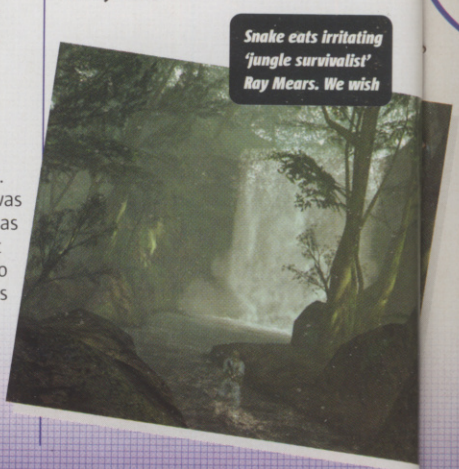
I work for Sony and I really hate my job so I thought I would reveal a secret we've been working on for six years using the highest quality graphics programs in the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, behold for I give you the PlayStation 4 logo... What do you think?



About as convincing as that s**t PS3 logo on the Net, eh?

Matt, Kent



Snake eats irritating 'jungle survivalist' Ray Mears. We wish

GEND-OFFENDER

What's with the current trend in stupidly named games at the moment? Ratchet And Clank: Going Commando; Kya: Dark Lineage; Maximo Vs. Army Of Zin. Imagine a group of nerds sat in a boardroom and the best they can come up with is Billy Hatcher And The Giant Egg. They should be ashamed of themselves.

Don't they realise the second people hear these dodgy names they instantly think, "Hmm, The Mark of Kri. Sounds Crap." They kill the game before people get a chance to see if it's good or not. Still, the dumbest name has to be Rex Nebula And The Cosmic Gender Blender, and that came out over 10 years ago.

Disco Stu

CVG Interesting argument, right up until the point you blew yourself out of the water. You're not related to Sock Boy are you?

LOCKED AND LOADED

Actually, Going Commando won't be the final name

Not even the fourth most important thing in life

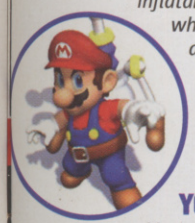
HIS NAME'S PAUL

I've noticed that almost every letter in your mag starts off with someone licking your ass, so I will try a different approach and see what happens. Your mag sucks and you're all ^*%&s, especially the dude with the hair. Anyway, how come I never win any of your compos? P.S. Love the mag.

Percy, via email

CVG Next month's top prizes are in the post. Along with a life-sized inflatable Jordan (guess where the blow-hole is) and Albert Einstein's ear. We've even managed to blag you a copy of Radiant Silvergun. That was a lie.

The dude with the hair: so unamused he's cut it all off



YOUR MAMA

Mario is the greatest game character of all time! Even my baby brother who is one year old knows who he is. He says "Ma..." every time he sees him.

Craig, Cheshire

CVG Just a thought, but your brother might actually be trying to say "Mama". Babies usually do. Not that we're suggesting you're videogame obsessed. Nor that Mario could actually be your mother. Although...

OLDER THAN GOD

Due to boredom I was just wondering who is the oldest member of the CVG staff and what was the first game they played?

Jogarv891 via email

CVG It's a close-run thing between Pete and Paul, though Alex isn't far behind. Paul remembers playing Space Invaders when it was new to the arcades and Pete still has his original Intellivision console, while Alex's first game was, yes, the legendary Pong. All this was happening when other team members didn't even know how to wipe their own arses. Still don't, in fact.

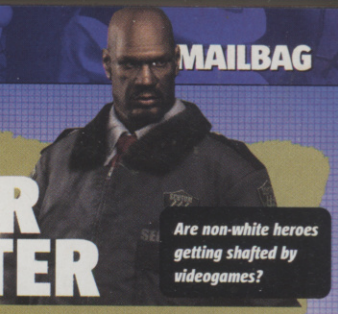
SICK BOY

Help me!!!! I got a PS2 last Christmas and now I'm working and getting a cashflow I can't stop spending my money on games and consoles. A couple of weeks ago I bought a GameCube just cos I wanted Zelda, and now I've seen Halo 2 and Half-Life 2 I want an Xbox. It's wrecking my social life. All I can think about are games, food, Dr Pepper and my girlfriend (not in that order), so please, please, please give me a number to call like Gamers Anonymous, or start a support group for people like me...

Suicidal Sock, Yorkshire

CVG Glad to see you're still with us Suicidal. Anyway, we're finding it hard to believe you're obsessed with just four things in life. Honestly, forget about Dr Pepper, concentrate on the important three.

STAR LETTER



Are non-white heroes getting shafted by videogames?

BLACK AND WHITE

Being a black person, I don't think there are enough black leading characters in games. If there are black characters, they tend to be sidekicks or have minor parts. Developers need to think a bit more about different people's cultures and incorporate them into games. So far I've only seen white leading characters, eg Lara Croft, Solid Snake, Mario, Zelda, the list goes on. It would be refreshing to see this aspect of gaming change. What do you guys at CVG think?

Ryan, Essex

CVG While past and future titles like Def Jam, Eternal Darkness and Resi Outbreak do let you control black heroes, there's seemingly precious few that cast black people in the undisputed main role. It's fair to say that even in those that do, like the Shadowman series or movie licensed stuff like Blade, the central characters haven't yet acquired quite the same videogame superstar status as those you mention. But developers can only lead the way in making their games more culturally diverse; it's then down to the gamers themselves to buy into this (not to mention the quality of the game itself). Maybe True Crime's badass ex-cop Nick Kang will be the first of a new wave this autumn.

JOYTECH

Each month's star letter-writer gets a bundle of quality peripherals from JOYTECH, so make sure you mark your name and address clearly.

WINNER

SPIRIT OF THE BLITZ

NFL Blitz is one of the most enjoyable games on Xbox to date but I was wondering if it was coming out for PS2.

Murphy, via email

CVG NFL Blitz 2002, 2003 and Pro are both out on Xbox and PS2, though whether there'd be any point you buying the PlayStation 2 version at this stage is debatable. Although, when PS2 online really takes off you will have to buy future EA sports games on PS2 if you want multiplayer over the Net, what with EA having signed one-year exclusivity with Sony in this respect.

Shoulder pads? Helmets? It's just not cricket

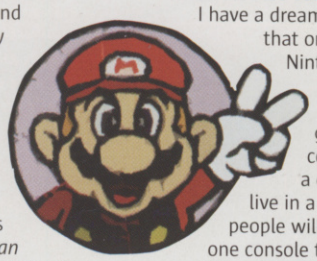
CONSOLE-NATION CORNER

PEACE AND HARM-ONY

If Xbox is too heavy and Cube is too light, why don't Microsoft and Nintendo combine?! I know this is very unlikely but it would create an average-sized games console and think of the games! Mario and his FLUDD [*or do you mean Flood? Geddit?* – Ed] killing the evil gits from Halo and Master Chief cleaning graffiti!

Michael, Essex

CVG Seems some of you spent too long peacing out together at Glastonbury, smoking copies of Rez and dreaming of videogaming's very own summer of love, where we all come together like one big happy family.



MARTIN LUTHER THING

I have a dream. I have a dream that one day, Sony, Nintendo and Microsoft will unite to make the greatest games console ever. I have a dream that we will live in a world where people will only have to buy one console to satisfy their gaming needs, a world full of happy children and adults because at the end of the day they can retire home to the best games console there is. This is my dream.

Paul, Herts

MINDS WIDE OPEN

It's just so unfair that Cube constantly gets dissed. Okay, it's not a DVD player, but it's a %^*@ing games console for playing games on. You guys at CVG who have been honest in telling the story of Cube's excellent games. All I'm asking is please, gamers, OPEN YOUR GODDAM MINDS.

Jonbah, via email

WHO CARES?

This debate about GameCube vs PS2 vs Xbox is ridiculous. I don't care what Jonathan from London thinks about Xbox. I'm going to buy the console I want for my own reasons and no one can change that. In any case, it's good for competition if people buy different consoles. I have a PS2 but I bet no one really cares .

John O' Connell, Co. Cork

PUBLISHER
ELECTRONIC ARTS
DEVELOPER
ELECTRONIC ARTS
OUT: OCTOBER

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

It's the only game where you can play a full match of Quidditch with proper rules and international teams (rather than the abridged versions found in the Potter action-adventures of the last two years). Prepare to straddle your Nimbus and shout, "Up!"

GC, PC, GBA, XBOX

WWW.EAGAMES.COM

PROVE YOU'RE THE BECKHAM OF THE BROOMSTICK AND BECOME AN INTERNATIONAL SPORTING HERO!

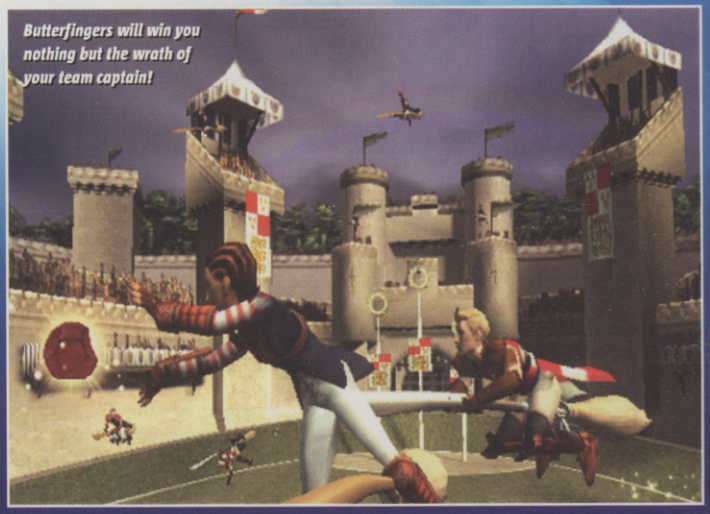
If you have ever dreamed of a stadium packed with 50,000 fans screaming your name in exultant unison...

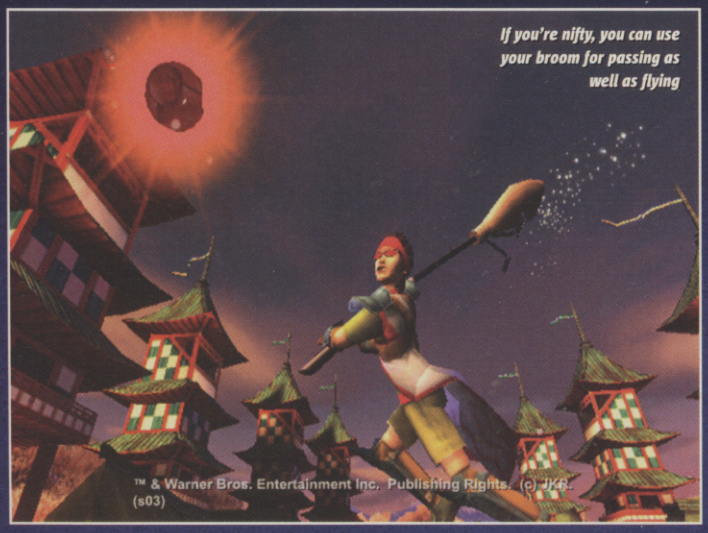
If you've ever wanted to control the forces of nature with awesome magical powers... Or even if you just fancy a good old-fashioned sporting ruck: the Quidditch World Cup is surely the tournament for you.

Handing you control of an entire Quidditch team, not just old scarhead, Harry Potter Quidditch World Cup gives you the chance to take your chosen team from the little leagues right through to international glory in matches played out in key locations spread across the entire wizarding world.

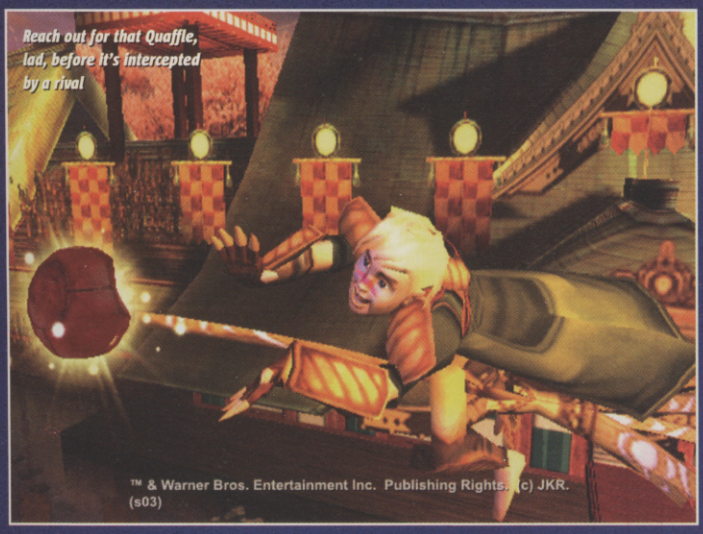
SCHOOL'S IN!

You can't just swagger up to the Premiership equivalent of Quidditch teams and expect not to be shown up


Butterfingers will win you nothing but the wrath of your team captain!



If you're nifty, you can use your broom for passing as well as flying



Reach out for that Quaffle, lad, before it's intercepted by a rival

as the inexperienced Flobberworms you are, though. Before you take on the pride of international Quidditch, you must first prove your worth in the Hogwarts House Cup and this is exactly where the game begins.

This being a Harry Potter game, there are far more surprises in store for those expecting solely sports-based action. There are five opening challenges that you must pass before you can play in the Hogwarts Cup. While these act as tutorials for the more advanced techniques of remaining perched on your broomstick while playing four balls simultaneously, there are also some cool story elements.

In one trial for instance, Peeves the meddlesome school poltergeist is running (or should that be floating?) amok and preventing your practice session. By showing some nifty flying manoeuvres and pummelling bewitched balls at him he'll be heading for the hills sharpish.

Despite the title bearing his name, HPQWC is less about Harry himself and far more about the teams who play the sport instead. You can of course control Harry and his fellow Gryffindor team-mates during the Hogwarts Cup, but you can also choose Slytherin House, as well as Ravenclaw and the least cool of the lot, Hufflepuff. We're no Death Eaters, but we'd rather play as the sneaky Slytherins any day. If the fiction is anything to go by, that's a team sure to use all manner of dirty tricks to ensure they win. Plus, their swooshing capes and black team strip are the coolest.

CHOOSE YOUR WEAPON

With the Hogwarts House Cup behind you and your rival teams left recovering in Madam Pomfrey's infirmary, it's time to test your magical mettle in the World Cup.

There are four different difficulty levels in the game, each relating to a type of broomstick. It's exactly like choosing between the different leagues and cups in

Dynamic camera angles and replays really show off the sauciness of the visuals

WHAT-ITCH?

You might be the biggest anti-Potter activist in the whole world, with a website devoted to Harry-blasting, but that doesn't mean you can't enjoy Quidditch.

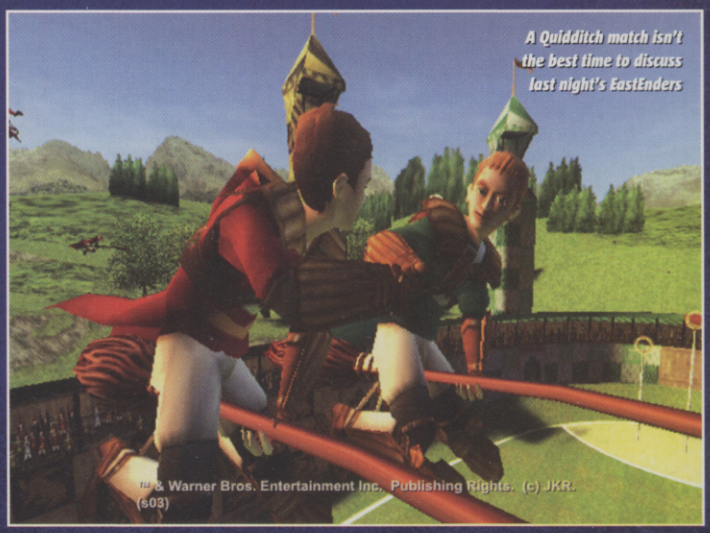
Taken out of the context of the Harry Potter universe, the game is fast, fun and brutal. If you've avoided all things Potter so far, here's a brief run-down of the most basic of game rules to help prevent an embarrassing defeat at the hands of Hufflepuff House on your first try.

Each team has three Chasers whose job it is to gain control of, and pass between them, the Quaffle ball, while avoiding rival interception by Chasers

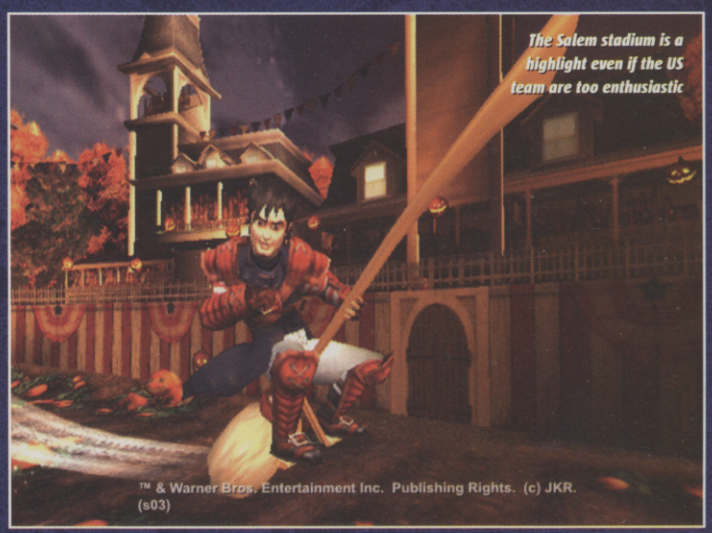
It's the job of the two Beaters on each team to protect players from bewitched Bludger balls. The Bludgers have been enchanted to whack the Chasers off-course

Chasers need to shoot the Quaffle into one of the three goal hoops when in the scoring zone. The opposing team's keeper should try to prevent this at all costs!

Meanwhile, the Seeker must search for the Golden Snitch. Catching this flying ball is worth 150 points, so whichever team grabs it first usually wins the whole match



A Quidditch match isn't the best time to discuss last night's EastEnders



The Salem stadium is a highlight even if the US team are too enthusiastic

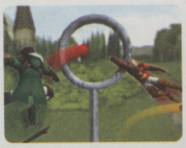
PLAYING THE FIELD

Let's face it, when you're playing Pro Evo, the last thing you're going to be wowed by is the pitch. "Wow it's, like, so green, man!" Likewise, you're not likely to be impressed by the court in NBA Jam. "So polished, man!".

Not so with Quidditch World Cup – the stadiums are incredible to look at. What's more, each nationality's home turf has its own theme and individual effects, from the Halloween-pumpkin feel of Salem, to the drizzle and rainbows of good old Blighty.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS
EACH NATIONAL STADIUM HAS ITS OWN EFFECTS, LIKE THE DAZZLING NORTHERN LIGHTS, AS SEEN HERE IN THE NORDIC STADIUM, MAGICALLY CREATED FROM AN ANCIENT ICE FLOE. EXPECT MYSTICAL FOG IN GERMANY'S BLACK FOREST, ORIENTAL BLOSSOMS FALLING FROM TREES IN JAPAN AND HEAVY, FOREBODING SKIES AND SPOOKY PUMPKIN LANTERNS IN SALEM

SCORING HOOPS
THERE ARE THREE HOOPS FOR LOBBING THE QUAFFLE THROUGH, AND EACH GOAL SCORES YOU 10 POINTS. SPECIAL GOAL ATTACKS SCORE YOU MULTIPLE GOALS AND MASSIVE POINT BONUSES. YOU CAN ONLY SHOOT, HOWEVER, WHEN IN THE DESIGNATED SCORING ZONE



GENERAL PLAYING AREA
IGNORE THE FLOOR BELOW – QUIDDITCH IS PLAYED IN THE SKIES! IN THEORY YOU'RE FREE TO MOVE AROUND AS YOU PLEASE BUT CONTROL IS ESSENTIALLY LIMITED TO MOVING TOWARDS AND AWAY FROM THE GOAL, WITH THE CPU AUTOMATICALLY KEEPING IN CHECK YOUR DISTANCE FROM THE GROUND

STADIUM SIDELINES
ANYONE WHO HAS SEEN THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS WILL REMEMBER THE SUPER-COOL QUIDDITCH SEQUENCE WHERE HARRY AND MALFOY CHASE EACH OTHER THROUGH THE INSIDE OF THE STADIUM BLEECHERS. YOU CAN DO THAT IN THE GAME TOO WHEN IN SEEKER MODE. HUZZAH!

INTERNATIONAL VELVET

The action in Harry Potter Quidditch World Cup is said to take place around the time of The Chamber Of Secrets and is a sort of videogame precursor to the events of the fourth book's Quidditch World Cup.

You'll see Harry and Draco Malfoy in their house teams, of course, along with favourites like Gryffindor team captain Wood, Pavarti Patil, and Lee Jordan (though there's no word on his trademark commentary as yet). Even Victor Krumm and Fleur Delacour make an appearance in the Bulgarian and French teams respectively.

Slytherin have better outfits but show far less sportsmanship

Harry's own team of Gryffindor, as they appear in the Hogwarts inter-house cup

Well caught there! Once in possession, zoom over to the scoring zone as soon as you can

He's closing in on you so make good your escape with some dazzling evasive moves

games like Mario Kart, only with a higher risk of splinters.

You begin with Nimbus 2000, then go on to unlock Nimbus 2001, Firebolt and, finally, Comet. The higher the rank of stick, the more aggressive your opposition and the tougher the conditions of play.

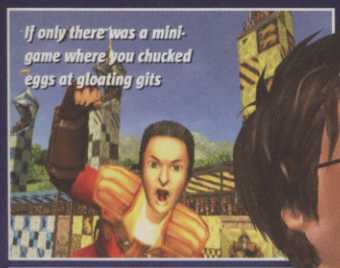
The individual teams you face also have different levels of aggression and artificial intelligence, and these stats will help you decide who to choose. There are nine teams in total. Will you go for the ultra-sporty American team who are big on teamwork and morale or opt for the Bulgarian team under the world-renowned captainship of Victor Krumm?

Other teams include Japan, who have a funky-punky Jap-cool look mixed with more traditional wizarding cloaks. The French team is big on acrobatic special moves while the Australians are a shiny bunch of broomstick-surfing dudes who have clearly spent more time tanning on the beach than in potions lessons.

VIVE LA DIFFERENCE!

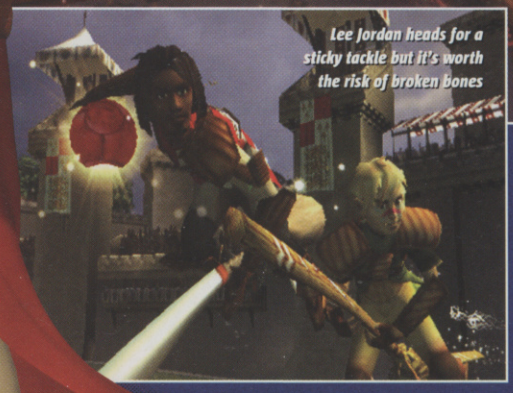
The differences between the teams' stats, along with their individual special moves means that it feels more like choosing characters in Street Fighter for their skills, rather than feeling an affinity to your own country.

The England Quidditch team may well have Harry, but the Nordic team can combine magic power and summon up a colossal vortex of ice and snow that blinds all defences and


If only there was a mini-game where you chucked eggs at gloating gits

Always be aware of who is flanking you when you've got the Quaffle

Could it be the lovely Angelina Johnson in the flesh?


Lee Jordan heads for a sticky tackle but it's worth the risk of broken bones

opens the goal up to multiple screaming point-scoring. You can only use these multiple point-scoring moves a limited number of times (more on this later), but their effects are devastating. Unblockable attacks include the Aussie team's tidal wave where they surf along on their sticks, or France's amazing acrobatic circus-like onslaught on the goal hoops, with Chasers passing the Quaffle by using their sticks as trapezes. Don't expect to see this zippy little move incorporated into Cirque Du Soleil's routine any time soon!

CUMULATIVE NIMBUS

As anyone who has read the books will know, the structure of the Quidditch World Cup isn't based on points like football, but rather on a cumulative points system. What this means is that the total points from each match played is added up and the team with the most points at the end of the entire tournament is the winner.

Each international team is played both at home and away, and the beauty of the cumulative points system is that even if you lose a couple of matches, you can still progress through to the next match.

The pressure will be on to score major points, though, and this is why grabbing the Snitch is so crucial! Plucking this teeny bewitched ball from the sky earns your team so many points that it usually guarantees a win and signals the end of the game.

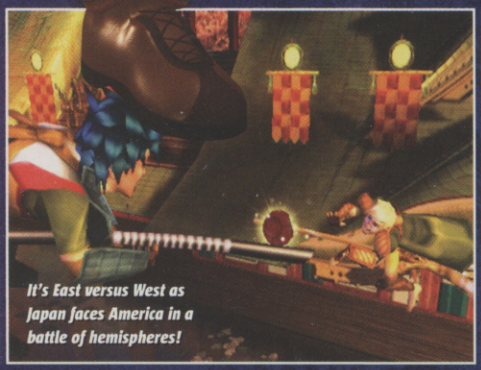
Boo! Hiss! Draco Malfoy is a bad lad with an even worse hair-do. Hurt him

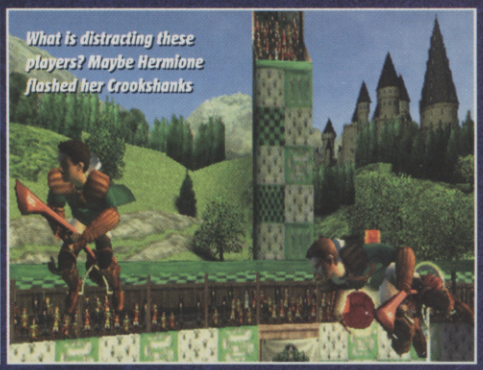
FLAME-RETARDANT BUTTTONS

With so many teams to go up against, not to mention those tricky Quidditch rules, you're going to need to know how your broom controls, bristle by bristle.

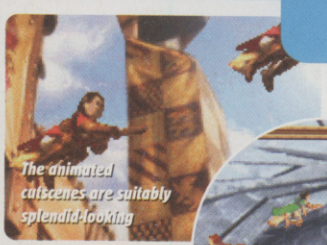
Those coming away less than impressed with the controls in HPQWC after this year's E3 are in for a surprise. That demo version had just one action

The Japanese stadium is a mixture of traditional pagodas and magic!


It's East versus West as Japan faces America in a battle of hemispheres!


What is distracting these players? Maybe Hermione flashed her Crookshanks

PORTABLE POTTER


The animated cutscenes are suitably splendid-looking

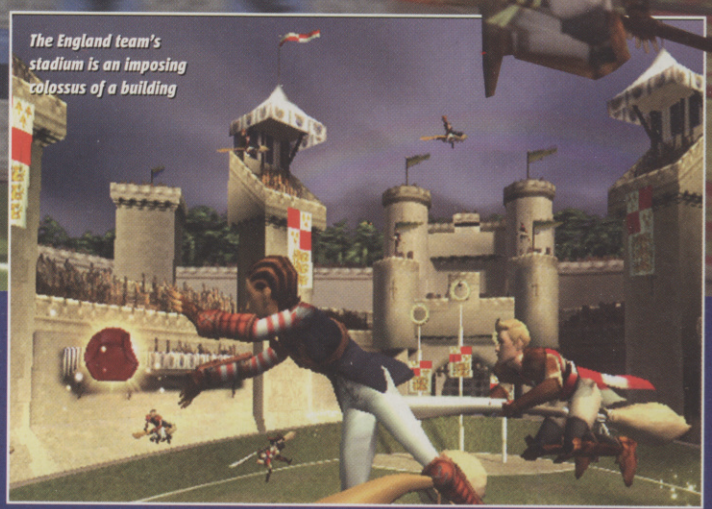
Careful your cheeks don't get frozen to your stick in the ice!

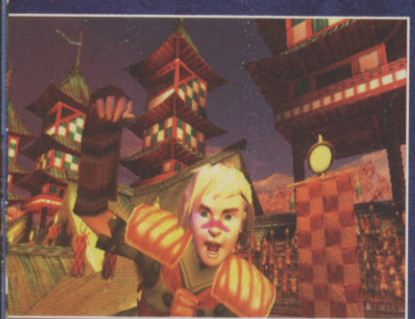
Simplified team colours make the action easier to see on GBA

Stripped down but (hopefully) no less sexy for it, the handheld version of Quidditch World Cup is played from a side-on viewpoint. Think FIFA on lightning-fast broomsticks and you'll be in the right ballpark.

The league and story structure remain unchanged from its bigger console brothers, but the action is simplified slightly for the lack of buttons.

What the GBA version can boast above all the others, however, is connectivity with the GameCube version. The idea is that a second player can assist in catching the Snitch on GBA while in Seeker mode. This sounds cool in theory but we've yet to see it in action.


The England team's stadium is an imposing colossus of a building


Sunblock and blond locks? Must be an Australian wizard or an extra from Neighbours

It's cheating to use a charm to make your palms sticky, but it helps you win!

button for passing, shooting – everything. Thankfully the game now features full controls, with individual button presses for dodging Bludgers or tackles, rolling, shooting, tackling rival Chasers, speed boost and special magical team attack.

The game's developer says the aim is to create a layered control system, so that younger players can get enjoyment from the game while older players still feel challenged. The basic controls are indeed very simple. Simply steering, passing and shooting will see you good for the first few rounds, and may even be enough to see you struggle through to victory in the Nimbus 2000 World Cup event. Progress up the ranks however, and you will need to employ devilish combos and team strategies to win.

Combinations of tackles, passes and shooting for the goal are trickier to pull off but easier to succeed with actual scoring if successful. It's up to you if you're feeling daring and saucy enough to risk it for the reward of maximum pointage.

When in the scoring zone you just lock on to the nearest available goal

FROM BOOK INTO GAME

Whether you play it safe or go for the impressive moves, the action looks incredible, regardless. Everything, from the beautifully realised stadiums and their lush and varied environmental effects to the players' cool team outfits, sparkles with a glossy high-budget, maximum production values veneer that does the Harry Potter universe proud.

The players themselves, even when simply tackling or passing, have some of the most intricate animation

Blat the Quaffle as hard as you can and who cares if you hit a rival Chaser?

The Hogwarts Quidditch pitch looks better than ever in this new game

sequences seen in a sports game. Players dismount and swing around their broomsticks to avoid Bludger hits or use their feet to intercept through balls. From what we have seen so far, the frenzied action captures what Quidditch is all about perhaps even better than action sequences in the movies.

That said, certain allowances have had to be made for the videogame version of the fictional sport to work in 'practice'. Describing the gameplay makes it sound more complicated than it is, so best make like Hermione and concentrate for this bit.

Matches are made up of two distinct segments, the Chaser mode and the Seeker mode. Chaser forms the main meat of each match and marks the point where control switches between your team members as you try to score the most goals.

The camera will always point you in the direction you need to shoot in when you are in possession of the Quaffle. Players can only shoot when they are in the scoring zone in front of the goal hoops.

Players' victory animations swing between cool and a bit annoying

Watch out for that tricky lens flare effect as you go for a tackle

PARSEL TONGUE!

WE TALK TO THE BRAIN BEHIND THE GAMES

We captured Harry Potter product manager Miles Beeson, locked him in Snape's dungeon and threatened to unleash the Blast-Ended Skrewts on his helpless self unless he gave up some of the game's development secrets.

CVG Can you say a little about how the game came into being, and what the original idea behind it was?

■ **MB:** *We did a lot of research following the release of The Philosopher's Stone, and the number one activity request made by Harry Potter fans was the ability to play a full game of Quidditch. Obviously, in The Philosopher's Stone and The Chamber of Secrets players had only played as Seekers, so we wanted to bring all the elements of this magical sport into one product.*

CVG What have been the biggest challenges in making a Quidditch videogame?

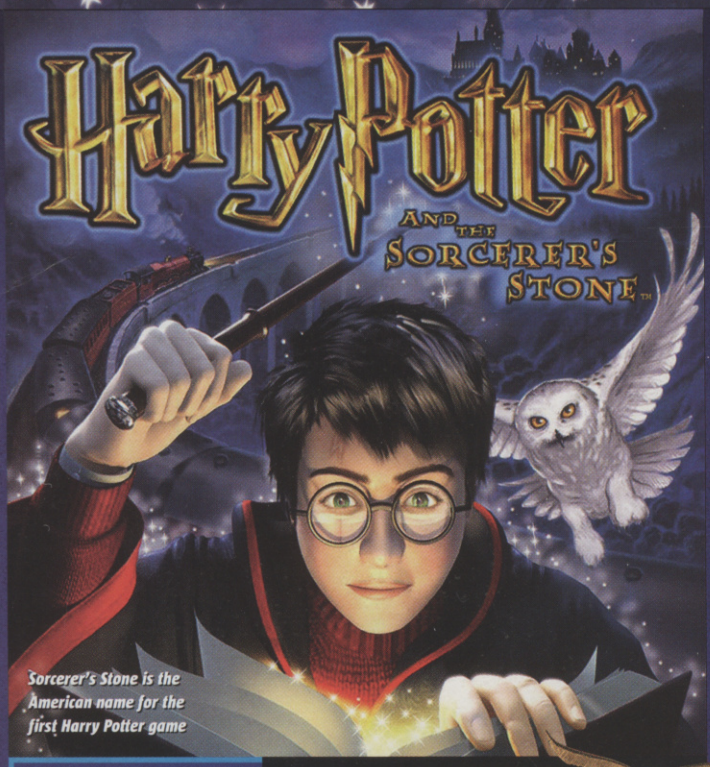
■ **MB:** *The biggest challenge for us has been creating a game that's based on a fictional sport. Basically, nobody has ever seen a 'proper' Quidditch match being played – apart from in the films. If you're making a football or basketball game, then you have real-life experience to base it upon, but obviously that's not the case with Quidditch. Not only have we had a lot of gaps to fill in, we've also had to teach people how the sport plays – hence the challenges at the beginning of the game. Overall, it's been great fun bringing to life a sport that people have basically only read about – and it's a sport that means a lot to Harry Potter fans.*

CVG Could you explain the interplay between the main Quidditch action, the Bludger Mode and the Seeker Mode?

■ **MB:** *The focus of the game is the Chaser experience. We felt that, as with a standard sports game, players would get the most out of passing, shooting and tackling. But we also knew it was important to give them the ability to experience all aspects of a Quidditch match. Therefore, you have the ability to initiate Bludger attacks and guide Bludgers into the opposition. You must also use Beaters to defend against Bludger attacks made by the opposing team. To get to the Seeker part of the game, you need to use the Seeker Bar at the top of the screen. This consists of two halves of the Snitch, which gradually come together during gameplay. When the two halves join, you are launched into the Seeker experience.*

CVG Where has the inspiration for the stadiums and teams not in the Harry Potter fiction come from, for example Japan and Australia?

■ **MB:** *We were given the direction from JK Rowling that the stadiums had been around for hundreds of years. With this in mind, we looked at each country and tried to identify strong cultural themes that we could build the concepts around. We tried where we could to find themes that had a magical aspect to them. It was important that the stadiums were very grand and in keeping with the spectacle that is the Quidditch World Cup.*



Sorcerer's Stone is the American name for the first Harry Potter game

The different countries' team outfits are insanely detailed

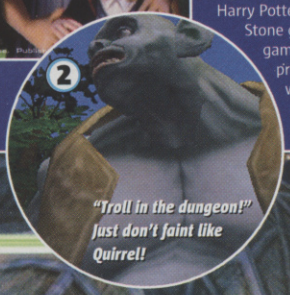
Check out the grit you need to intercept! It's a thrilling sport, for sure

POTTER REVISITED

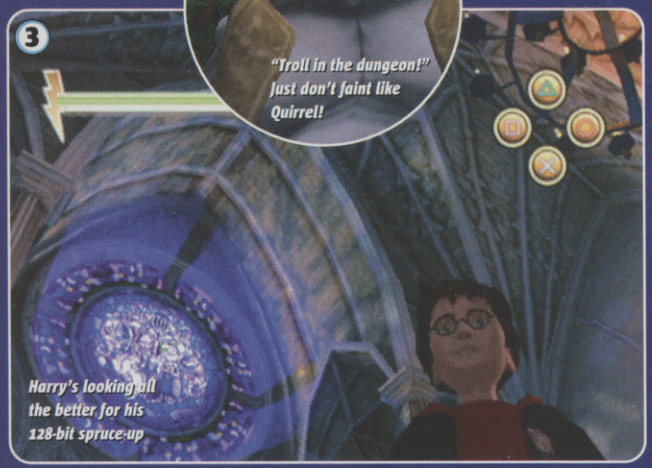
As before, there will be scenes recognisable from the book

An expert licence-milker like EA isn't going to let a little thing like the lack of a new Potter movie this year spoil its chances of making cash.

In addition to Quidditch World Cup you can expect to see PS2, Xbox and Cube remakes of the very first Harry Potter And The Philosopher's Stone game this autumn. Core gameplay should remain pretty much the same, but with slightly more complex puzzles and suitably fantastical visuals.



"Troll in the dungeon!" Just don't faint like Quirrel!



Harry's looking all the better for his 128-bit spruce-up

SCRATCH AND SNITCH

Although the game is fully 3D, moving around is basically limited to one plane, with the computer automatically adjusting your height in relation to the ground so you don't need to worry about crashing! What you *do* need to worry about is the Snitch Bar at the top of the game screen. This bar shows two halves of the Golden Snitch at either end of the gauge. One represents your team's progress in spotting the Snitch, and the other represents the opposition's.

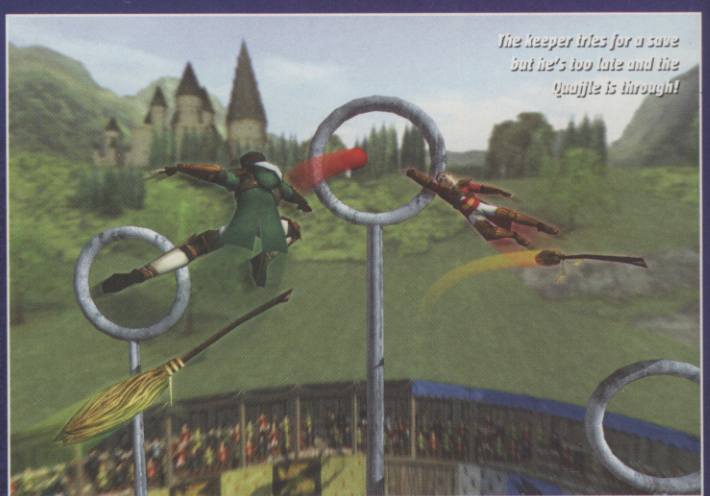
As play proceeds, the bars fill up and the Snitch halves move closer together. What's clever is that you can choose to convert some of your progress toward finding the Snitch into special moves and speed boosts. This brings a certain amount of strategy into play: it's good to catch the Snitch early if you're ahead in the league, but if you need more points you should try delaying spotting the Snitch and trading Snitch energy for mega moves like controlling homing Bludgers against the enemy.

HIDE AND SEEKER

When the two halves of the Snitch finally do meet, the game enters Seeker mode. Taking control of your team's Seeker, you must chase the Snitch while fending off the rival. You can slipstream in its wake for a speed boost or try ramming your rival off course. The only thing that matters is nabbing the Snitch first! Whichever team's Snitch Bar is fullest when the halves meet will have an advantage over the other team, adding another layer of strategy – albeit a simple one.

Despite this lengthy description, the gameplay is fluid and effortless, and as fast-paced and brutal as you could ask for. If you're still struggling to get your Muggle head around it, think of the action as a weird and wondrous hybrid of basketball (chasing the Quaffle), cricket (whacking the Bludgers) and racing (Seeker mode).

We've played HPQWC and we think it's got the potential to be the best Potter game yet, with appeal reaching far beyond the books and films. Quidditch is a cool sport in its own right, and in a games market flooded in recent years with identikit extreme sports games, F1 racers, footie sims and US sports titles, Quidditch World Cup should twinkle on the shelves like the original gem it's shaping up to be. CVG



The keeper tries for a save but he's too late and the Quaffle is through!

Light trails and special effects will tickle your eyeballs as you try to win the match

CVG OPINION

Fast, furious, slick and sassy, this is a lot better than you'd maybe expect. Should prove a slice of sporting magic even for the most die-hard Potter-phobes. **Lee**

WE LOVE

- *Just as Quidditch should be*
- *Top-drawer production values*
- *Cool special team attacks*

WE HATE

- *On one plane and not fully 3D*
- *Simpler than the book 'Quidditch Through The Ages' suggests*

GAMES

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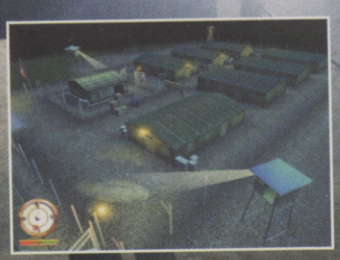

www.thegreatescapegame.com

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INCOMING

ACCESS ALL AREAS TO THE HOTTEST FORTHCOMING GAMES!

HOW CVG'S PREVIEWS WORK

- PUBLISHER ACTIVISION
- DEVELOPER ACTIVISION
- OUT: DECEMBER 25
- ONLINE GAMING
- x16

IN A NUTSHELL
Hotly anticipated, super-realistic, sneaky covert-ops sequel to last year's first-person shooter. The team-orientated multiplayer mode encompasses a wide variety of objective-based missions.

GAMECUBE XBOX GBA

WWW.ACTIVISION.COM

ONLINE GAMING
Can you play the game online, against other gamers around the globe? Find out here

PUBLISHER, DEVELOPER AND RELEASE DATE
Who makes the game and when it's due out, to the best of CVG's knowledge

PLAYERS
How many people can play. If it's anything from one to 32, we'll put 32!

IN A NUTSHELL
A brief summary of what the game is like. If it's an update and CVG has already previewed it we'll also sum up stuff we've said before

FORMAT
The console we played the game on is highlighted red, but other formats it's coming out on are listed too!

WEBSITE
Want more info, more screens and to see it in action? Visit this URL!

THE BEST PICS
See exactly how good (or bad!) the game looks with CVG's sweet-as screenshots

INFO OVERLOAD!
What it's like to play, how it compares to other games and whether it's any good

CVG OPINION
What we thought of the game, no matter what stage of development the game is at

WE LOVE
The good things we like about the game so far

WE HATE
The things we'd really like the developers to avoid including in the final game

WHAT THE EXCITE METER™ MEANS
You can tell how excited CVG's experts are about the game being previewed simply by looking at the Excite Meter! Easy, huh?

GHOSTHUNTER

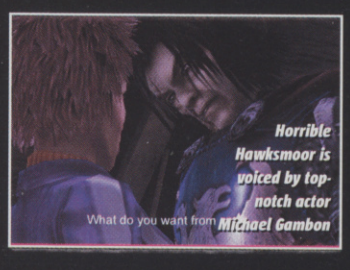
- PUBLISHER SCEE
- DEVELOPER SCEE STUDIO CAMB.
- OUT: WINTER
- ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL
Action-adventure spook 'em up featuring Lazarus Jones, a rookie Detroit cop who accidentally unleashes a barrel-load of ghosts, ghoulies and other pesky evilness. One such fiend kidnaps Lazarus's partner Anna, leaving Laz behind to clear up the mess.

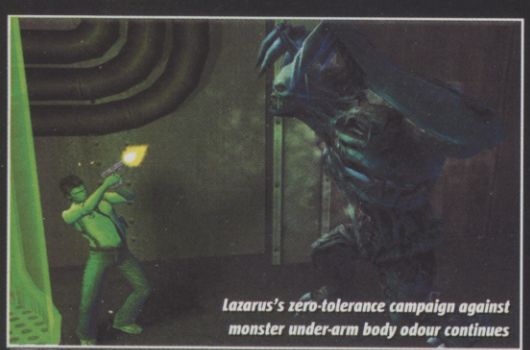
WWW.PLAYSTATION.COM

It's the stuff of nightmares. A little girl, spooked by the dark, clutches her teddy bear and edges nervously forwards. Steadily, her true demonic form is revealed. The teddy bear begins mutating before your eyes into a huge drooling monster, swinging the devil-child from its scabrous arm like a crude cudgel.

Good job Lazarus has a dirty great shooter to cause teddy a world of fluffy hurt. One down, thousands to go.



Horrible Hawksmoor is voiced by top-notch actor



Lazarus's zero-tolerance campaign against monster under-arm body odour continues

The killer teddy bear from hell is just one of the ghostly entities that Lazarus Jones meets on his quest through six distinct, self-contained realms. While most of them want to rip his spine out through his eye sockets, a couple are actually quite helpful.

Lazarus's main ghostly ally is Astral, the spirit of a kidnapped scientist who fuses with Lazarus at the start of the adventure, giving him the power to see ghosts. Throughout the game you'll find Astral Switch Points where you

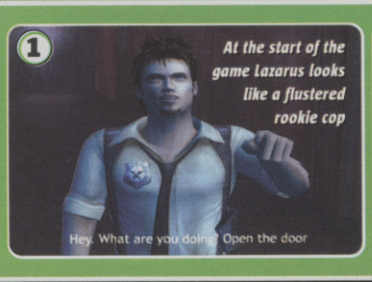
The amazing facial detail even shows individual eyeballs rolling in sockets

Anna grabs some last moments of sanity in the Supernatural Research Centre

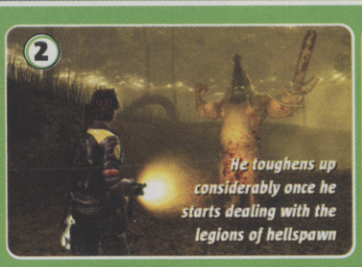
LAZARUS RISING

According to lead artist Jason Wilson the character of Lazarus Jones, Detroit city cop, was inspired by Brad Pitt's hard nut character in the cult movie Fight Club.

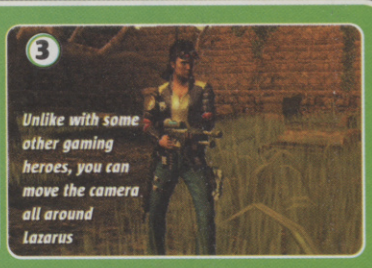
"We knew we wanted someone who was hopefully kind of cool, that guys would like and women would like."



At the start of the game Lazarus looks like a flustered rookie cop

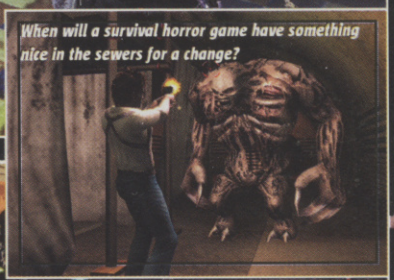


He toughens up considerably once he starts dealing with the legions of hellspawn



Unlike with some other gaming heroes, you can move the camera all around Lazarus

If you feel like puking there's a handy bucket in front of teddy


When will a survival horror game have something nice in the sewers for a change?

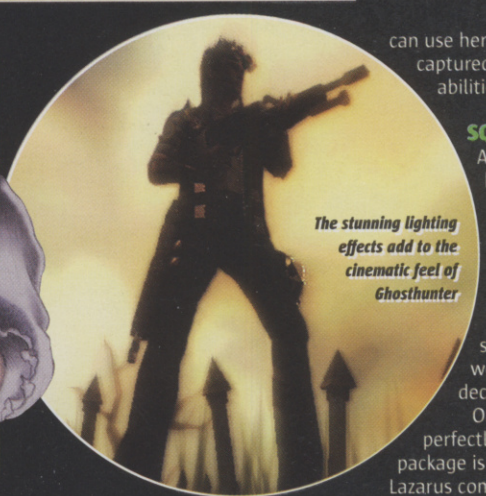
The swamp-dwelling rednecks welcome our hero to their annual barn dance, chainsaws optional

"You've got a little girl with a teddy bear and the teddy bear batters you with the little girl. We did realise that we were straying into territory which for some people could be a problem, especially in America where they're extremely paranoid about this stuff, and rightly so. We are aware that sometimes we could go too far. We do pull back and make the kids very demonic and obviously like something out of The Exorcist so you don't feel much sympathy for them. We want people to have fun and be scared, a little like a Mummy movie – but not the Mummy 2!"

JASON WILSON

"One of the remits was that we didn't want to have loads of blood and gore because the Resident Evil games had done that. We wanted to do things differently. But for some reason a lot of stuff we started doing did involve kids' toys. I think it's because sometimes people find clowns scary so we wanted to tap into that kind of mentality."

JASON WILSON


The stunning lighting effects add to the cinematic feel of Ghosthunter

can use her powers to possess captured ghosts and acquire their abilities to solve puzzles.

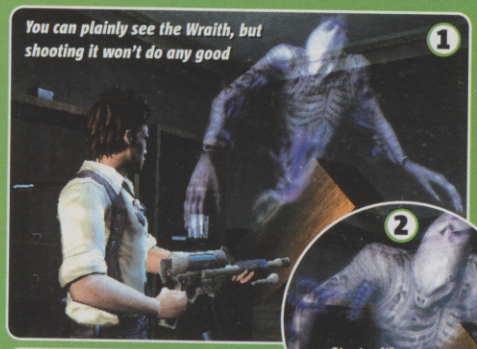
SQUEAL LIKE A PIGGY

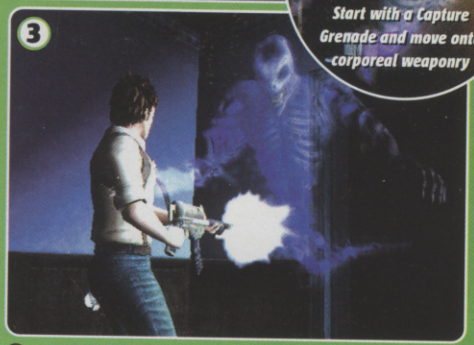
Although Lazarus may not be as agile as Astral, the enhanced Primal engine allows him complete freedom of movement. He can jump, run, climb ladders and swing on beams. He also has a selection of heavy weaponry worthy of any decent third-person shooter.

One memorable level that perfectly illustrates the whole package is the Alabama Swamp. Here Lazarus comes up against an army of

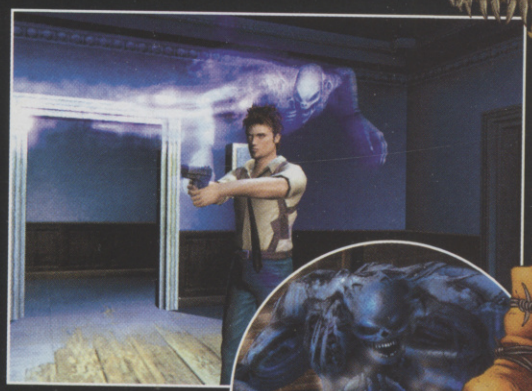
HARD TO KILL

Although fusing with Astral enables Lazarus to see ghosts, normal weapons are ineffectual against ethereal entities. To make them solid enough to shoot, you first have to hit them with a Capture Grenade. You can then use your weapon of choice to blast away until they're sucked into Lazarus's portable Array.



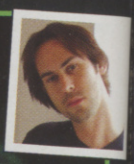


Time to let rip and read Mr Ghost his spook rights



Motion-capturing ghosts is impossible, so they've all had to be hand-animated

When Astral possesses a ghost you can control its movement and actions for a short time

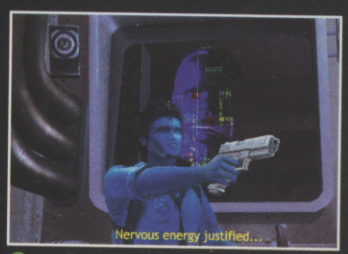


"In this company, especially with me and James [Shepherd, creative director], we talk in film references all the time. Luckily he has a similar background to me in watching '80s horror movies and stuff.

We talk in complete gobbledegook film and comic book language, but we add our own to it as well. We don't take things from other games, we take things from movies."

JASON WILSON

Choose either the advanced, strafe-friendly control system or a simplified fixed cursor set-up



The game's snappy dialogue will frequently have you laughing out loud

Deliverance-style rednecks wearing dead crocodiles for hats and brandishing bloodied chainsaws. The rednecks use cloaking technology to enable them to snipe away at Lazarus unseen. You can either storm your way through the swamp and hope that you land a few wild shots, or you can use the sniper rifle and Spectral Goggles to reveal thermal images of the rednecks and pick them off with precision.

It takes a while to master the controls but the end result is an incredibly atmospheric sequence.

There are plenty of scary and unsettling moments, with nods towards classic horror such as Texas Chainsaw Massacre and Aliens, but it's not as relentlessly gloomy as Silent Hill. The humorous quips from Lazarus help to lighten the mood, as do the visual gags. Looking very tasty indeed.

Spot the movie references in the Swamp level

Using the Spectral Goggles makes the Swamp dwellers a lot easier to spot

"The PlayStation 2 is pretty powerful, but with every game you work on there's always something that's not going to go in there. Luckily in this project we've got extremely good technical people so it means that we can do stuff that we've never been able to do before."

JASON WILSON

CVG OPINION

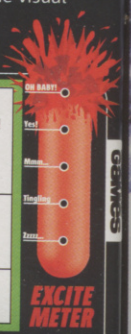
At last a survival horror game that doesn't rely solely on gore! The puzzle-solving elements look interesting, and the set pieces are impressive. **Maura**

WE LOVE

- Twisted character design
- Witty script and acting
- Superbly detailed levels

WE HATE

- Could be sicker
- Controls take practice



CHILL OUT

WITH These COOL Sega TITLES OUT On GBa THIS SUMMER

GAME BOY ADVANCE™ SEGA®

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Your team can use abandoned machine guns to establish strategic positions

You and your enemies can now catch fire, like the unfortunate chap up ahead here

Your team-mates react even more intelligently to orders, but still no 'make me a cup of tea' command. Wouldn't last long at CVG

New weapons include Claymore mines and incendiary grenades to really fire things up

- PUBLISHER: SCI
- DEVELOPER: PIVOTAL GAMES
- OUT: SEPTEMBER
- ONLINE GAMING: x4

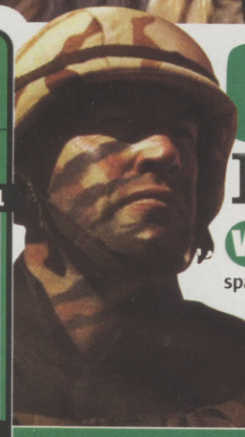
IN A NUTSHELL

Back to Iraq with the sequel to SCi's multi-million-selling team-based strategy shooter. More weapons, improved visuals and advanced AI promise to shock and awe fans of the original, and newcomers too.

PS2 PC, GC

WWW.PIVOTALGAMES.COM

CONFLICT DESERT STORM II



War is a terrible thing. Without it we would all be living in a sparkling utopia where everyone was happy all the time.

Sounds boring, doesn't it? We're pretty pleased that war rather than boring civvie life has inspired some of our favourite games and now Conflict Desert Storm II looks like it's going to continue this fine tradition.

WAR IS HEAVEN

The biggest departure from the original is that you can't complete a mission if any of your team dies. It makes things tougher, but also creates intense situations where you're fighting off enemies and desperately trying to save your pals. The action takes place in more interesting locations than the original, including towns where every street corner becomes a strategic strong point.

The most exciting improvement, though, is in the AI. Enemy soldiers will take cover more effectively and have to rely on their sight and hearing to track you down. The result should be a much keener feeling of close-quarters combat, and with improved control over team orders there is huge potential for executing devastating ambushes. In one level we used our sniper to distract the enemy before sneaking up behind their backs. Lots of fun.

Desert Storm II provides a more realistic experience than the first game, and it never forgets it's meant to be enjoyable. The only worry is that it might feel more like an update than a true sequel. We suggest that you hold your position and await further orders, soldier. CVG

BETWEEN IRAQ AND A HARD PLACE

The opening level in Conflict Desert Storm II marks a pleasant departure from the dusty expanses of the first game. You need to get inside the city of Al-Hadar under cover of darkness, and you'll soon see that the nightlife isn't very inviting.

Take a ride into town in a heavily armed jeep - it's cheaper than hailing a cab

There's an enemy at the gates - notice the Apache helping out overhead

Keep hammering away at the defences and the city will welcome you in

CVG OPINION

The military action feels as exciting and authentic as ever, and the improved AI promises to create a genuinely satisfying strategic element. Graeme

WE LOVE
- Topical settings, well realised
- Blistering firefights
- Action, stealth AND strategy

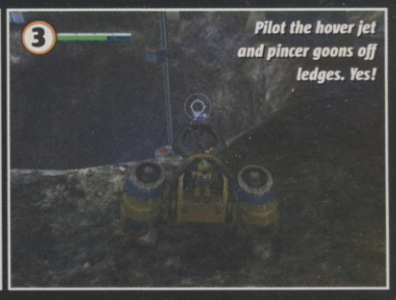
WE HATE
- Doesn't feel or look too different from the original
- Level design slightly restrictive

SUPER-COOLING TANKS

Metal Arms is full of neat little twists that make you remember just why you love playing games. Snipe the legs out from underneath gigantic hulking mechs or use your pincer vehicle to pluck them from their footings, depositing them into a fiery pit of death. Muchos coolness, huh?

1 Enemy robots explode in a shower of fiery nuts 'n' bolts

2 The EMP grenade disrupts neuro-circuitry and looks way pretty


3 Pilot the hover jet and pincer goons off ledges. Yes!

METAL ARMS
GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM

The rocket launcher is put to great use in the game. Blam-o!

- PUBLISHER: VIVENDI
- DEVELOPER: SWINGIN' APE STUDIOS
- OUT: WINTER
- ONLINE GAMING
- x4

IN A NUTSHELL

Rampage across a world inhabited entirely by robots in a third-person shooter that plays like Halo crossed with Ratchet & Clank and cheesy robo-comedy Short Circuit but in a good way.

PS2 GC

WWW.METALARMS.COM

Sci-fi plots are always banging on about future worlds where robots become sentient and take over the population. We guess the current truth – a world where vengeful robotic vending machines swallow your change in an act of revolution – wouldn't be quite so gripping.

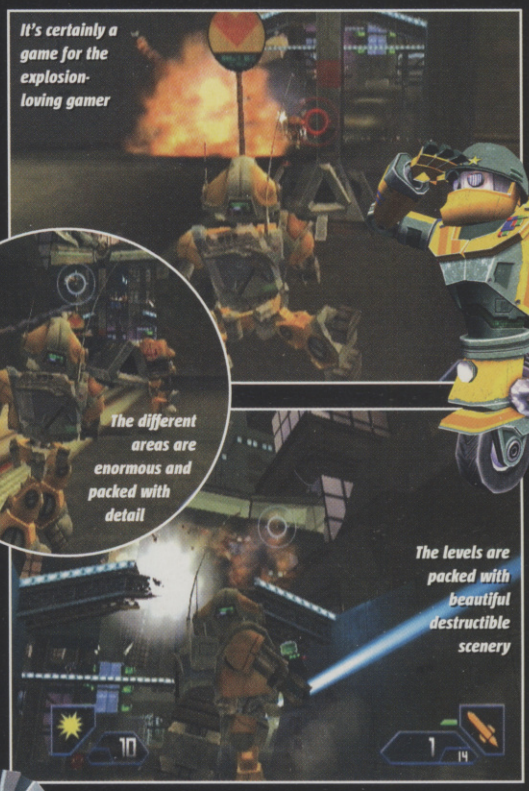
Metal Arms at least puts a bit of a spin on the familiar theme, with robots revolting against other robots on a planet exclusively inhabited by – you guessed it – robots. We hope you're not robophobic.

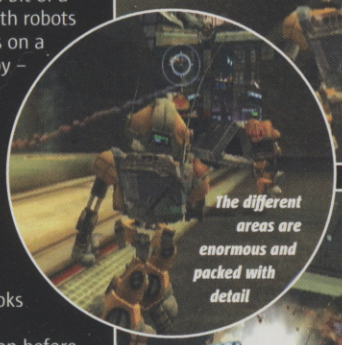
BUFF BEAUTIFUL BUTT

The first and most astounding thing to shoot sparks at your eyes is the incredibly slick production. The frame rate is smoother than molten steel as what looks like thousands of automaton parts explode across the screen before your eyes, and the shine on your main hero Glitch's metal ass is a joyous sight to behold. What a bonus, then, to find that there is also a cracking game lurking under the shiny hood.

Although it's played in third-person perspective, Metal Arms might as well be called 'Halo with mechs'. Not as catchy a title, but it sums up the action perfectly. The control set-up will be instantly familiar to any FPS fan and Glitch is free to commandeer enemy vehicles, gun emplacements and even possess enemies as his adventure unfolds.

You have an awesome arsenal at your disposal, from rocket launchers to ripper guns that tear through foes' circuitry and leave their appendages dangling uselessly. Any game that lets you cripple giant robo-muthas by blasting their kneecaps should win your vote instantly.


It's certainly a game for the explosion-loving gamer


The different areas are enormous and packed with detail

The levels are packed with beautiful destructible scenery

Clamber aboard vehicles and gun emplacements to dish out da beats

You can attach a scope sight to almost all of your weapons to maximise the sniping fun

Who will you choose to fight first, the gun turret or the goon?

Enemies rebuild themselves after being smashed up so keep pluggin' away

CVG OPINION

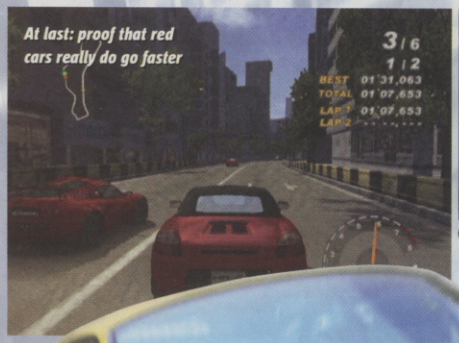
Smells like Halo, squeaks like Bender from Futurama. Should prove to be a highly polished, high-adrenalin shooter worthy of tiding you over till Halo 2. Lee

WE LOVE

- Beautiful visuals, on Xbox at least
- Cool weapons and items
- Plays like a third-person Halo

WE HATE

- There are no humans and currently no flesh to shred
- Currently really frickin' difficult

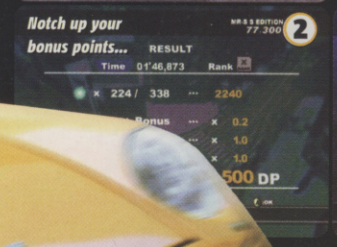


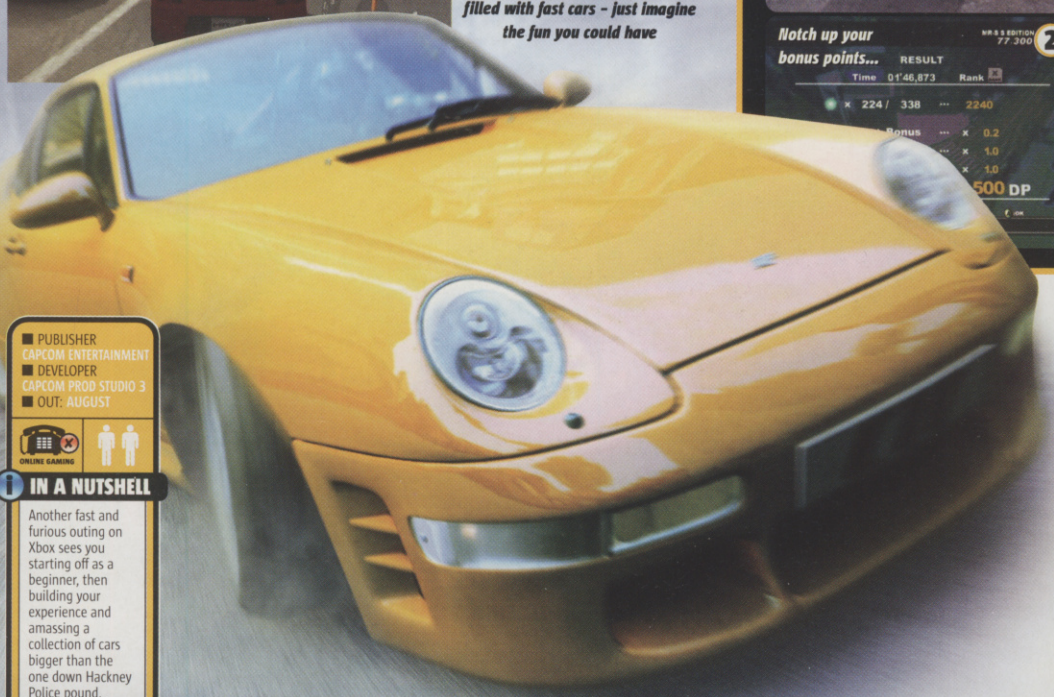
All those blank spaces can be filled with fast cars – just imagine the fun you could have

TOW THE LINE

Line mode allows you to race around an empty track collecting tokens, as you learn how to rack up the fastest lap time.

Depending on how quickly you complete the course and how many tokens you collect, you will be awarded driver's points to buy yourself a shiny new car and leave the rest of the pack in your wake.





- PUBLISHER: CAPCOM ENTERTAINMENT
- DEVELOPER: CAPCOM PROD STUDIO 3
- OUT: AUGUST

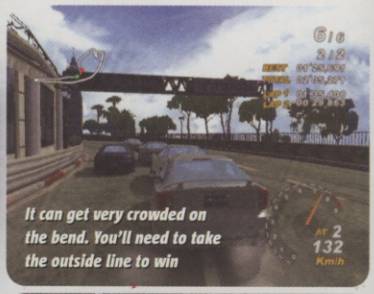
ONLINE GAMING

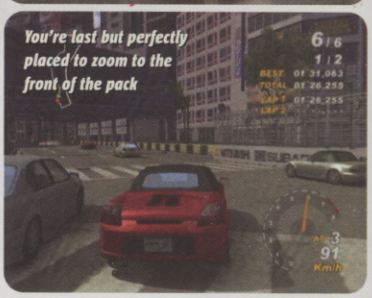
IN A NUTSHELL

Another fast and furious outing on Xbox sees you starting off as a beginner, then building your experience and amassing a collection of cars bigger than the one down Hackney Police pound.

WWW.CAPCOM.COM

GROUP S CHALLENGE





Most of us are never going to experience the real-life thrill of tearing round a track at 200mph in a gleaming red Ferrari.

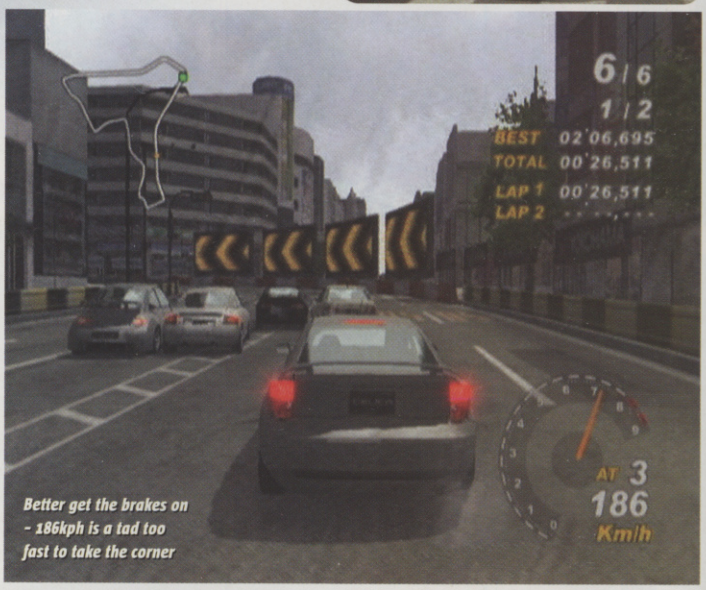
Mind you, most of us will never know what it feels like to hit the track wall at 180mph and spend months in plaster taking all our meals through a straw, either. Hence, the console racer has long been our favourite way to experience high-speed injury-free thrills – not counting the slightly blistered thumb, of course.

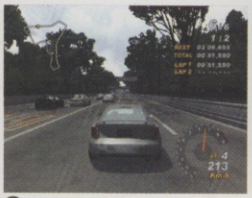
Group S Challenge offers you the chance to get behind the wheel of a staggering number of cars. You start in the beginner ranks but as you progress you get the opportunity to take some truly nippy machines out for a spin.

GET YOUR MOTOR RUNNING

The version we played is looking good. The cars handle brilliantly and the tracks are nicely varied, ranging from the wide open straights of Surfer's Paradise in Australia to the dreaded hairpin bend in Monaco.

The only gripe at this stage is that there is very little to set Group S Challenge apart from the bevy of racers already available on Xbox. Having been spoilt rotten with Midnight Club, Project Gotham and Burnout 2 it is a little hard to see how this offering from Capcom can make the impact it's after.





Once you get onto the straight you can really put your foot down – and it's a good feeling

While your opponent spins out you can whip round the outside and take the lead

CVG OPINION

A decent enough racer but with such a glut of gorgeous-looking examples available it's difficult to find anything that makes this stand out from the crowd. **Paul A**

WE LOVE

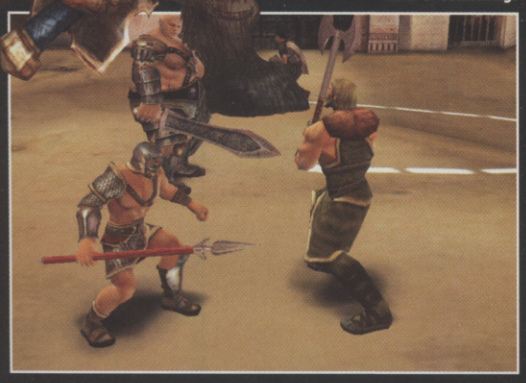
- Plenty of depth to the gameplay
- The experience given by the Thrustmaster Steering Controller

WE HATE

- No online option as yet
- Lacks any unique features to set it apart from other racers

EXCITE METER

GLADIUS



Don't just stand there, try to look hard or something!

- PUBLISHER ACTIVISION
- DEVELOPER LUCASARTS
- OUT: SEPTEMBER

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

Fight in gladiatorial battles through a fictional ancient land, in this action-packed turn-based role-player. Choose your hero, then hand-pick and train a group of warriors to compete in the games and win the Emperor's approval.

XBOX PS2 GC

WWW.LUCASARTS.COM

Russell Crowe has a lot to answer for. Every so often a movie comes along that game designers can't help but feel inspired by. The previous heavy hitter for imitation was The Matrix, but Gladiator seems to be catching up with the effect it's having on coders.

Enter Gladius, a turn-based role-player set within the arenas of gladiatorial combat. The game strays from historical Rome, however, placing the action within a fantasy setting in which players compete to be the Imperial Champions of all the Gladiator teams.

CHOOSE WISELY

After picking a hero you must learn the ways of combat and slowly assemble a team of warriors before entering tournaments and moving up the hack 'n' slash league tables. There are 16 different types of character classes for you to choose from and over 100 character types. Selecting the right balance for your team is essential if you're to prove victorious.

Although the real-time nature of the gameplay means you'll have to use your noggin rather than callused thumbs to progress, there is an element of skill involved in battles. A real-time swing meter determines the outcome of each attack. Pressing the confirm button at the wrong moment results in your warrior mistiming their attack. In other words, it's like the swingometer on a golf game. CVG

NOT SO ANCIENT HISTORY

Many of the character classes and equipment featured in Gladius did exist in Ancient Rome, but the designers felt that setting the game in the real world within the confines of 'real' history would have been too constraining. They wanted to include elements such as magic, hence the decision to place Gladius in a fictional setting.

Isn't that Tim Roth in Planet Of The Apes?

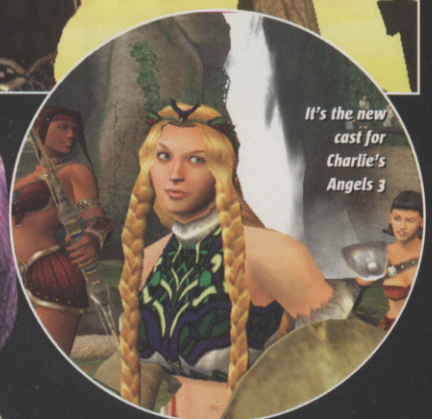
Don't remember reading about those in the history books

It will take him a while to bury all of the skelly's bones in the back garden

The DIY hairdo look was fashionable back then

Ooooh! Now that's magic!

Welcome to Tesco town centre car park, late Saturday afternoon, AD14



It's the new cast for Charlie's Angels 3

The Russell type and the Scandinavian-looking She-Viking seem a bit cosy...

CVG OPINION

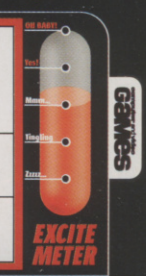
With two separate storylines, some surprising twists and plenty of swords and sorcery, Gladius is well worth keeping an eye on. Alex H

WE LOVE

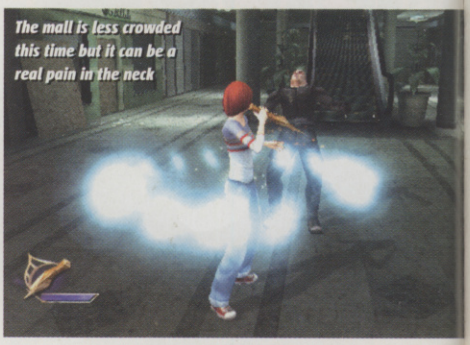
- The mad mythical beasts
- Features different fighters
- The size of the arenas

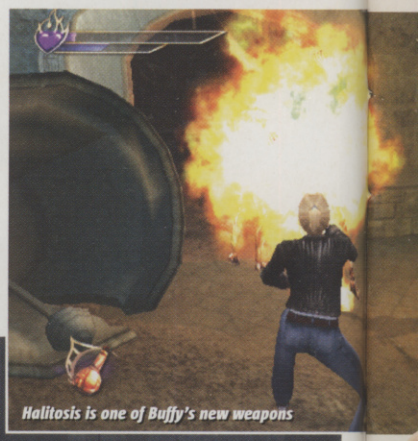
WE HATE

- The California accents
- Joke-filled dialogue
- Too many beards



Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Chaos Bleeds


The mall is less crowded this time but it can be a real pain in the neck


Halitosis is one of Buffy's new weapons

PUBLISHER
FOX INTERACTIVE
DEVELOPER
EUROCOM SOFTWARE
OUT
TBC

x4

IN A NUTSHELL

The vampire world's most feared slayer goes multi-platform in a bewitching cocktail of puzzle solving, putrefying demons and kick-ass 3D fighting.

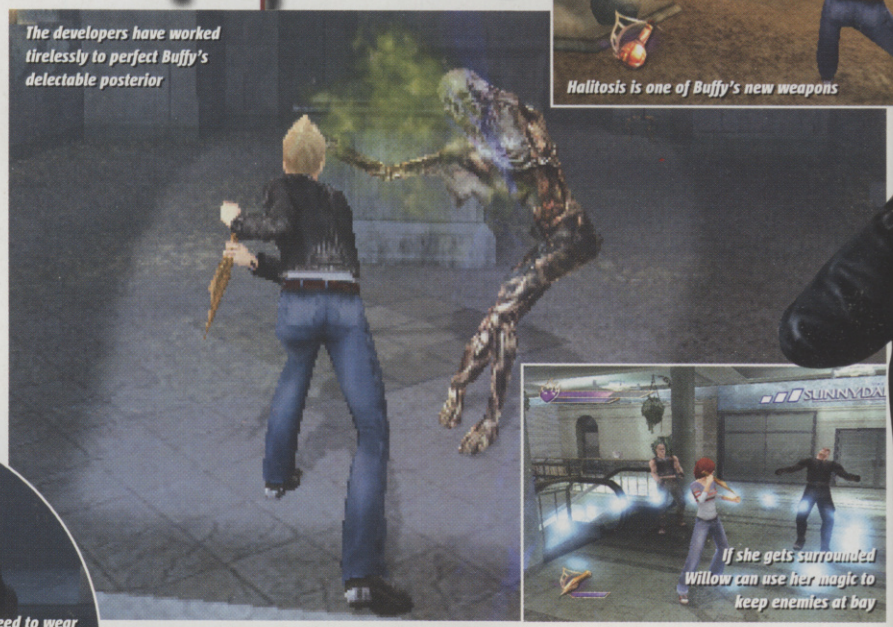
GC
XBOX

WWW.VUGAMES.COM

That Buffy's a generous girl. As well as keeping watch over the inhabitants of Sunnydale, California, and providing a weekly dose of denim-clad derrière perfection for thousands of red-blooded males, the flaxen-haired slayer has returned to your palms, delivering her unique brand of fast-paced action.

IT'S TIME FOR HOT BUFFY ACTION

Chaos Bleeds takes the form of a lost episode fitting into season five of the TV series. A rift between worlds (a 'dimensional bleed') has been discovered and the vile portal is haemorrhaging legions of undead upon Buffy and her cohorts, threatening to consume humanity once and for all. Blimey.

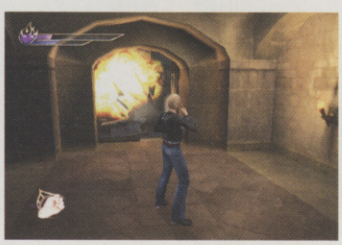

The developers have worked tirelessly to perfect Buffy's delectable posterior

If she gets surrounded Willow can use her magic to keep enemies at bay

You need to wear enemies down before you can stake them

The Magic Room is one of the locations that fans will recognise instantly from the show

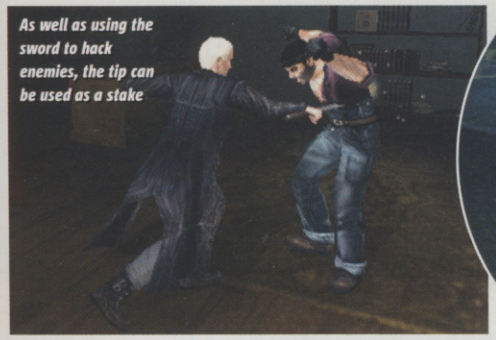
The moody settings recreate the feel of the show perfectly


Roast Buffy could be appearing on Sunnydale restaurant menus if she goes through there

The game's story is written by series regular Chris Golden and watched over by Buffy bigwig Joss Whedon (who appears as a playable character in the multiplayer game). This ensures that Buffy the game sticks very close to Buffy the show. This is further aided by all the characters being voiced by their respective actors, with the exception of Buffy, whose lines are spoken by an unknown, not that you'd notice the difference.

The show's irreverent humour is pleasingly present too, emerging in the story line and in the recorded quips, kiss-off lines and taunts, which number more than 6000.

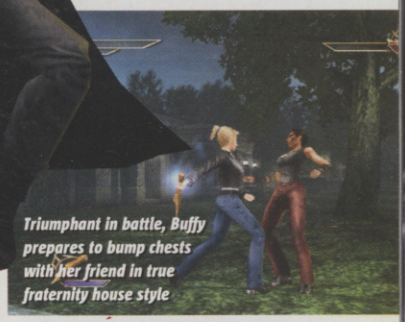
You can play as either Buffy, Spike, Willow, Xander, Faith or Sid (a three-foot ventriloquist's dummy possessed by the soul of a slayer). All of the characters have slightly different attributes specific to those of their telly-show counterparts, endowing them each with their own unique style of fighting.

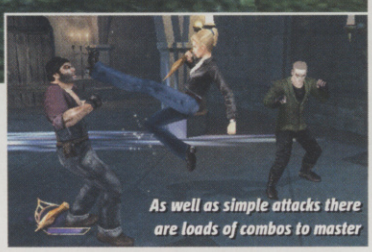

As well as using the sword to hack enemies, the tip can be used as a stake

Spike tries to hide by masquerading as Harry Potter

Slayer power adds an extra devastating punch to Buffy's combos

The zombie shocked Buffy by eating her feet first


Triumphant in battle, Buffy prepares to bump chests with her friend in true fraternity house style


As well as simple attacks there are loads of combos to master

The detail of the light streaming through the stained-glass windows adds to the atmosphere

One huge bonus for fans of the show is the wealth of hidden material totally exclusive to the game. This includes cast interviews, outtakes and footage of the voice recording sessions. Only problem is, Sarah Michelle Gellar isn't included. Dammit.

THE TIME IS NIGH

If you're a newcomer to the show, worry not: there is nothing here that requires any prior Buffy knowledge. The puzzle elements have been kept simple so that the focus stays firmly on kicking nightcrawler ass.

The moves in Buffy are deceptively simple. Button bashing will get you past the first few flesh eaters you encounter but you will need to master all the different combos, of which there are a bucketload, in order to really do damage.

As you progress through the game you can pick up slayer power. This adds a little more oomph to the finesse of your well-timed combos, enabling you to dispatch demons quickly and in style.

DEFEAT EVIL, THEN JOIN THEM

In multiplayer mode you can select to play as either Buffy, Willow, Spike or Xander. As you progress through the game you will unlock a further 20 different characters. This means that you can play some of the levels as a slayer, vampire or a demon. Adding further to the variety, there are four different modes in multiplayer: Survival, Slayer Challenge, Domination (no, not that kind) and Bunny Catcher. Fans of the show will find the last one hilarious.

Trash the demons then take out Spike. The faux Cockney accent is reason enough

Knock Willow down and let the zombies finish her off. This is survival!

STAKE AND CHIPS

Weapons feature quite heavily in Chaos Bleeds. You can pound a vampire all you want but you'll need a stake to finish him off. A large portion of the furniture is breakable so broken chair legs become handy stakes. We particularly enjoyed smashing demons in the face with a shovel, then palm-spinning our weapon to dispatch the ghoul with the sharp end!

The version we saw was close to finished and looking pretty fine, a solid fighting experience with loads of great extras from the show thrown in. Those of you who missed out last time due to Xbox exclusivity should start saving – it's payback time.

CVG OPINION
Spot-on humour and mood plus cool extras to have fans frothing at the mouth. And there's more than enough kick-ass action to please everyone else too. **Paul A**

WE LOVE
- Great fighting
- Six playable characters
- Loads of hidden extras

WE HATE
- No online option
- Similar to the original

EXCITE METER

Influences on character design appear to include 2000AD and Square's Final Fantasy

There's no antidote for this mechanical scorpion's sting so watch your step!

The fixed camera angle means Krenn's mega eye laser fires directly into the screen

Tal loses his contact lens for the third time in a day. Clumsy young man

EXCLUSIVE NEW SCREENS AND FRESH INFORMATION!

SUDEKI

- PUBLISHER MICROSOFT
- DEVELOPER CLIMAX
- OUT: TBC

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

Ambitious action-RPG fusing Western and Japanese influences with some ideas of its own. Exploration, spectacular visuals, a deep real-time combat system plus item-collect, hero customisability for a broad appeal.

WWW.CLIMAX.CO.UK

A statue lighting his own fart. Whatever next?

Many great things are expected of Xbox's exclusive new role-player, Sudeki.

Can a British developer really make a Japanese RPG that is actually any good? The answer is no. But not through any shortcomings; it's because, despite the name, Sudeki isn't trying to be Japanese or American. It's a British RPG, with Climax citing influences as diverse as Final Fantasy, Diablo, Zelda and Devil May Cry. See for yourselves...

FIGHT CLUB

Sudeki's combat system seems a bit whiffy at first glance, but it's far deeper than it first appears.

Based on a four-tier system, it starts with Light and Heavy attacks and moves onto Combos, which can be chained together to take out multiple enemies. Sudeki uses the first-strike principle – whoever gets in the first blow is more likely to get in the next.

The heroes' Skill attacks work a bit like bullet time in a shooter meets turn-based role-player, and they offer a wide range of tactics. When you call up your inventory of attacks as you would in an RPG, the action continues in slo-mo – initially at five per cent of normal speed, but later on at 60 per cent. So you need to make tactical decisions against the clock. These attacks work off a Skill meter, which tops up with kills or potions. Finally, there are the godly Spirit Strikes, which deal mega damage and can even be combined, though you won't use them often and they're earnt through the plot.

Weapon animations and spell effects finish in spectacular Spirit Strikes

Climax might enable Skill attacks to be accessible off the pad too

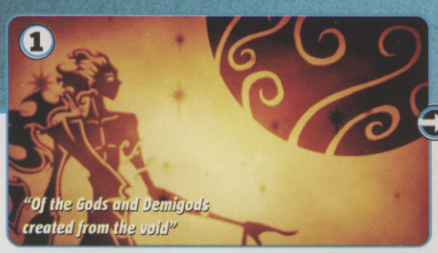
Sudeki uses a soft and hard target lock system, a bit like Zelda

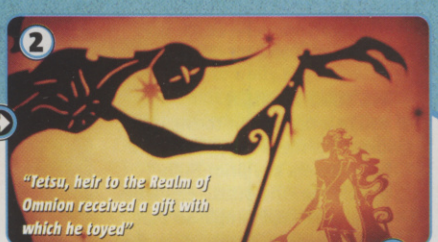
PUPPET MASTERS

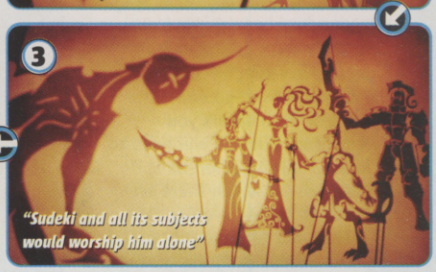
As the eyes are the window of the soul, so opening cutscenes are to a videogame. And in our time we've come across a few who deserve to have their peepers stabbed out with pokers. Sudeki, on the other hand, has stuck its balls on the line, risking accusations of being a bit pseudo to come up with something different and arty that works.

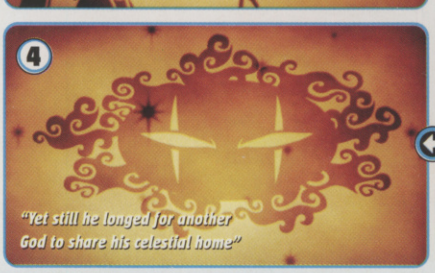
Viewing the story of the mythology behind Sudeki told by Indonesian shadow puppets and verse is a strangely mesmerising and beautiful experience; the game taps into the roots of storytelling while giving a flavour of the mixed cultural influences to come.

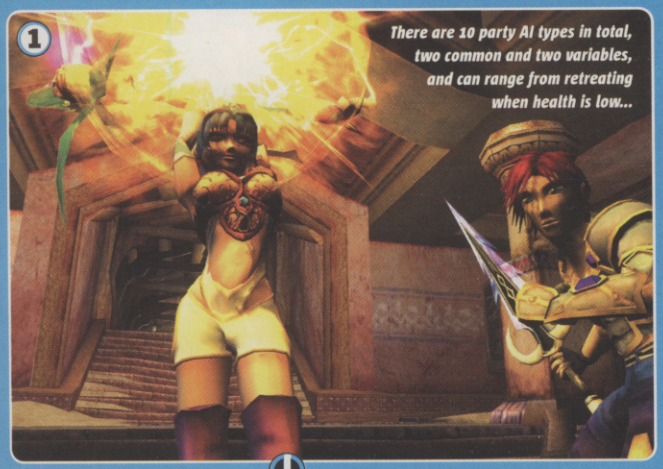
Narrated excellently by Dr Who actor Tom Baker, the Omnion Prophecy tells how 1000 years ago the world of Sudeki was torn in two, with parallel Light and Dark worlds left to develop independently – a premise central to both Sudeki's plot and gameplay. Our heroes start out searching for the Crystal of Light to help their Queen defeat her Dark foes, but as you progress they begin to wonder if all is as black and white as it first seems...

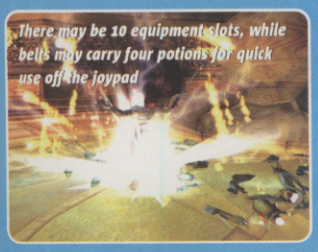












ON THE LEVEL

Your four heroes represent different disciplines with unique abilities like jet-packing and seeing invisible objects for puzzle-solving. You can customise them to suit your style of play.

Levelling up allows you to choose where to invest points, whether to put them into core stats and thereby improve normal attacks and magic or buy new skills and combos – so you could choose to limit some of your foursome's array of attacks but ensure the ones they have are more powerful.

You can switch between which hero you directly control, but you also get to choose the AI routines of other party members – again, this varies between characters. You'll also be able to customise equipment, finding and buying items to suit your chosen development route - you can even pay blacksmiths to craft special runes Diablo-style into weapons, adding whatever special abilities you prefer.

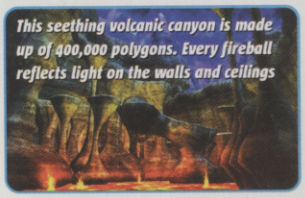
Ⓐ *Socketable items will take three to four runes, which are dropped by fallen foes*

Ⓐ *Most weapons come from shops, and you can see items before you can buy them*

A LINK TO THE PAST

The parallel world plot has really allowed Climax to get creative with its visuals. The Light world has all the light and is the cause of friction with the Dark world, which is under constant attack from demonic hordes pouring from the void between the two worlds.

This history is reflected stylistically, the Light world being more Japanese themed and the Dark more gothic European – all volcanoes, thunder and withered plants. As 1000 years ago they were the same world, you'll find that some places and even people have their other world counterparts – so you'll find castles and statues in the same locations that look totally different.

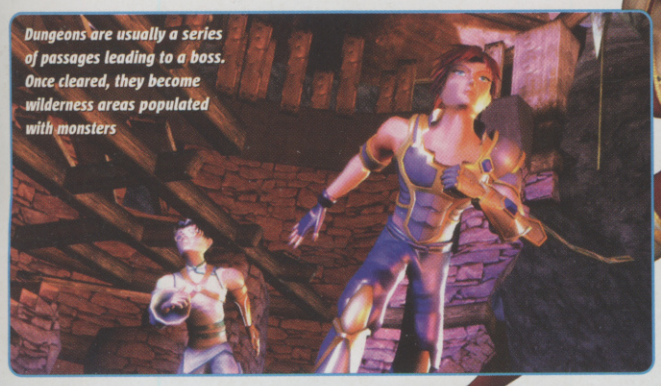


YOU CHOOSE

Restricting your party to four heroes may not make Sudeki sound like it's offering much choice but the freeform structure helps offset this, promising to let you decide how you want to tackle the adventure.

The worlds are split into towns for trading, wildernesses for hunting and dungeons for fighting. There are no random encounters and you're not obliged to acquire certain skills before progressing – speed of progression is down to you and your skills. If you'd rather go off and explore, that's fine.

More skilled players can concentrate on trawling the dungeons of the main plot quests and skip all the areas and skills; others can concentrate first on levelling up on sub-quests to make their characters more powerful. Or you could go down the trading route, hunting and earning enough money to buy better equipment before progressing – worlds have their own economies, so you'll need to shop around for good prices.



CVG OPINION

Could Sudeki be the quality, exclusive, made-for-console RPG that Xbox lacks, or is it trying so hard that it'll end up satisfying no one? More soon. **Pete**

WE LOVE

- *Spectacular, tactical combat*
- *Big beautiful worlds*
- *Creative ideas – that intro!*

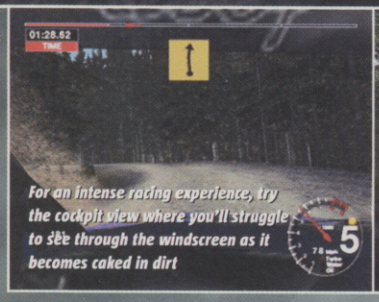
WE HATE

- *No multiplayer*
- *Is it trying too hard?*
- *People bitching about the name*

The graphics look loads better, with improved lighting effects and convincing shadows that make the tracks feel natural and alive

With 34 driving surfaces and 19 tyre types, you can just keep rallying

There's a range of classic cars to unlock, like this flash MG



For an intense racing experience, try the cockpit view where you'll struggle to see through the windscreen as it becomes caked in dirt

The expert championship will separate the men from the boys with its tough races, manual gears, realistic damage and in-car view

PUBLISHER CODEMASTERS
DEVELOPER CODEMASTERS
OUT: SEPTEMBER

x4

IN A NUTSHELL

Revered by many as the ultimate console rally game, Colin McRae is skidding back to the PS2 and Xbox in its slickest incarnation yet. Packed with new challenges and enhancements, this is one to watch.

WWW.CODEMASTERS.COM/COLINMCRAE04

colin mcrae rally 04

After flogging more than six million copies, it must have been tempting for the Colin McRae coders to bash out an identikit sequel that would sell shedloads on its gear-grinding reputation alone.

Mercifully, Codemasters has gone back to the drawing board to overhaul the formula. Petrol-heads are about to be served up something new, and it's an even more realistic and rewarding experience.

A NEW BEGINNING

While Colin McRae Rally 3 only featured a handful of gaming modes, the fourth edition is packed with challenges. There's everything from the two- or four-wheel championships where you compete for fame and fortune, to the hair-raising rallies that whisk you across the globe to some of the sport's most treacherous tracks.

A stack of multiplayer modes allow players to join forces and race for the same team, or sign up with rival manufacturers. There's even a sexy selection of classic cars to control.

The biggest change is the handling. Although Colin McRae titles have often been praised for their intuitive controls, many players felt uncomfortable with the games' steering which made it feel as if the cars were pivoting around a central point, rather than bumping and burning around the courses. This time, however, the steering feels more natural and convincing, allowing you to feel the weight of the vehicles as they skid and powerslide around the tracks.

With dazzling graphics, beautiful presentation and an option for faffers to spend hours in the workshop tinkering with their machines, Colin McRae 04 is shaping up to be one of the deepest and most exciting rally sims on the market. CVG

Multiplayer supports up to four boy racers

TESTING TIMES

Another new feature is the chance to earn new bits and bobs for your motor.

Winning parts requires you to try your hand at a series of driving tests around the world. Fun mini-games add variety to the package, as well as helping to improve your driving techniques.

2 Complete the challenge in the time limit and get a brand new engine

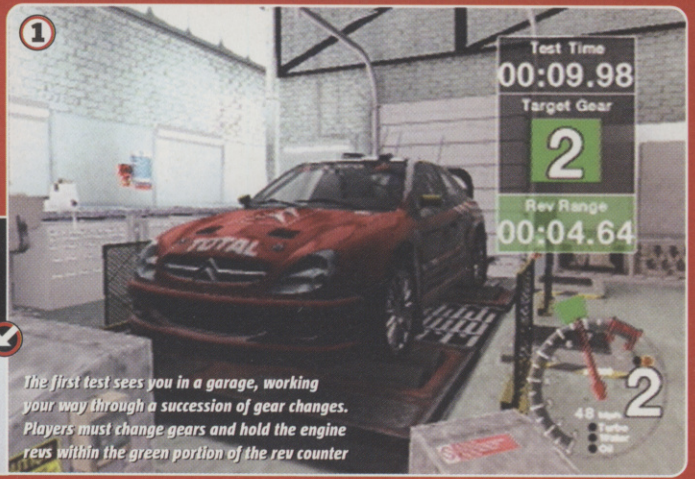
CONTINUE EXIT
continue championship

The Citroen Team has unlocked the new Engine.

Success! With this new engine it will be possible to compete at the highest of levels.

04 testing

1



The first test sees you in a garage, working your way through a succession of gear changes. Players must change gears and hold the engine revs within the green portion of the rev counter

CVG OPINION

With its improved handling and expanded gameplay, Colin McRae 04 looks like it'll be more than just an update – it's a whole new game. **Dave**

WE LOVE

- Improved, realistic handling
- Slick graphics
- Tons of multiplayer modes

WE HATE

- Cars still sound like hairdryers
- Takes time to master the sensitive controls

ZONE OF THE ENDERS
THE 2nd RUNNER

■ PUBLISHER
KONAMI
■ DEVELOPER
KCEJ
■ OUT: OCTOBER

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

Most Manga cartoons don't look nearly as fantastic as the in-game action here! Nor does gameplay get much more explosive than this livewire mech titan's. The wait is almost over.

WWW.KONAMIJPN.COM

UPDATE!

In a beauty contest ZOE 2 would make all other mech games look like dirty munters

All environments are fully destructible. Shoot it and see!

Sparks fly when metal clashes with metal. But when a 1000-ton steel warrior clashes with hundreds of titanium mean machines you best run for cover because things are bound to go atomic.

Popping ZOE 2 into your PS2 is like launching a ballistic missile in your living room. Few – if any – arcade shooters look as impressively explosive and stylish as Konami's high-speed robot action thriller.

NEO WHO? OH, THAT WUSS!

Only a three-level demo was available for CVG's preview of ZOE 2 back in February. This time we've had free rein over the whole damn adventure, and fans of the series should be chuffed to hear that Konami has addressed a couple of the biggest criticisms of the original.

It's a helluva lot bigger and tougher. There's little chance that you will clock it nearly as quickly. You are almost constantly surrounded by swarms of enemies to slice, dice and zap into smithereens.

Remember the scene in The Matrix Reloaded when Neo's fighting all those Agent Smiths? Well, that's tame compared to these maniacal battle scenes. The only one-on-ones take place in the new dramatic boss scenarios. But even then, their attacks usually consist of hurtling hundreds of heat-seeking projectiles at you. There's no letting up in the world of ZOE 2!

The boss battles are far more monumental this time round

BRACE YOURSELF

ZOE 2 will have you bouncing off the walls. No, really. In this new version when you get hit hard your giant mech hurtles backwards and slams into a wall, which makes you immobile and vulnerable. The lesson to learn? Don't get hit!

If you don't swiftly dodge heavyweight attacks you will be treated to an unforgiving dose of monster whiplash

When you successfully beat certain enemies you earn new sub weapons

100-to-one fun. Don't count 'em, just kill 'em! Kill 'em all!

The landscapes are miles bigger and more detailed than before

Tactics? What tactics? If it moves, just turn it into scrap metal!

UPGRADED AND UP FOR A RUCK

Don't worry, though. Konami isn't throwing you to the lions unequipped. In this second outing the combat system feels more natural and responsive, thanks to the improved auto-lock functions and camera angles.

Anyway, you're hardly going in naked. You're packing stacks of new blasting hardware. Not to mention all your mad new skills. You can now grab enemies and use them as shields MGS2-style, before slamming them brutally against the nearest surface. Plus you can pick up and throw almost any on-screen objects at enemies.

It's all here for you, but this time round you need to work your shiny metal ass off to stay alive.

CVG OPINION

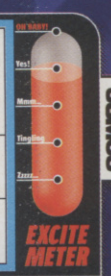
A thumb-blistering experience that's worlds apart from other robot games. Lightning quick, spectacularly flash, intense and relentless. **Mike**

WE LOVE

- Mental futuristic battles
- Breathtaking graphics
- Bigger, bolder, harder

WE HATE

- The cutscenes break up the action too much
- Uninspired two-player mode



ADVANCE WARS 2
BLACK HOLE RISING

■ PUBLISHER
NINTENDO
■ DEVELOPER
INTELLIGENT SYSTEMS
■ OUT: OCTOBER

ONLINE GAMING | x4

IN A NUTSHELL

All you need to do is to crack the cute outer shell and once inside you'll access the most intense, addictive, furiously challenging and original strategy game ever to make its way onto a handheld console.

WWW.ADVANCEWARS.COM

When Advance Wars hit shelves back in January 2001 it took the handheld community totally by surprise and fast established itself as the most painfully addictive game on Planet Earth. Between the eight of us at CVG we must have racked up over 1000 hours of play! That's got to be a world record.

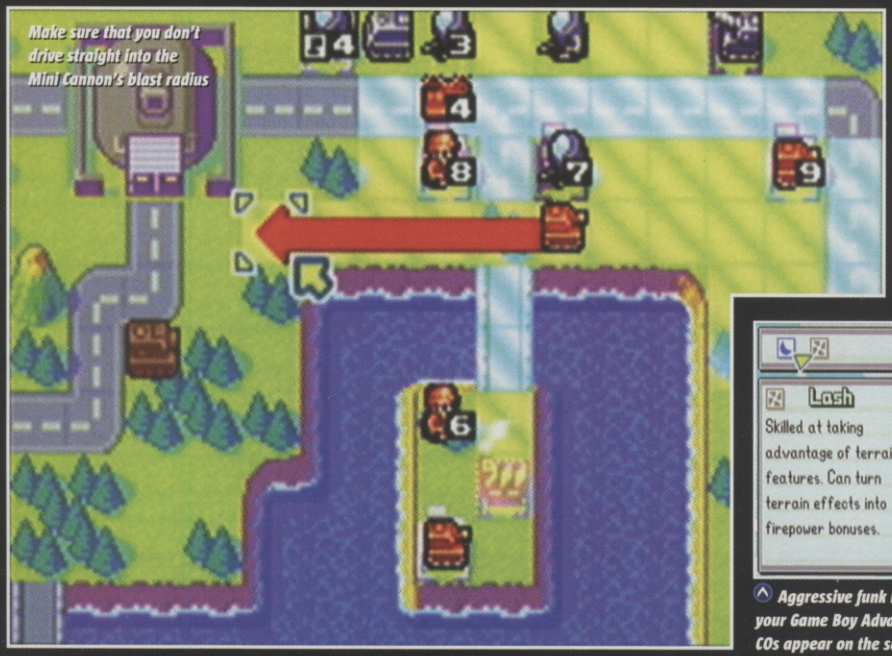
Advance Wars 2 takes the formula that made the original tactical masterpiece so successful and throws in a job lot of exciting new ingredients set to make the sequel even more un-put-downable.

New CO powers, funky and uniquely skilful commanding officers, stacks of new equipment and heaps of fresh strategic scenarios to overcome. Plus a set of *even* more brain-boggling missions that'll have you pulling your hair out for months on end until you're as bald as Harry Hill.

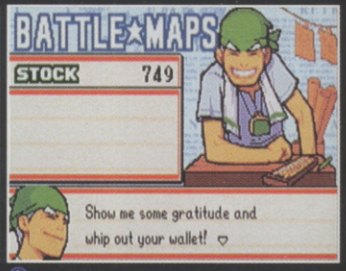
WAR STORY

Nozzle-faced weirdo Sturm has rallied together a posse of new COs to help him invade the entire world. It's your job to take control of the situation and cripple their attempt at global domination. Plenty of gripping action and cheeky plot twists await you.

The game's dialogue is razor sharp and very humorous



Aggressive funk metal tunes bleep out of your Game Boy Advance whenever Black Hole COs appear on the screen



Complete the standard Campaign and you get the option to buy a super-hard 33-mission extra Campaign adventure

BLACK HOLE

HAWKE
NEW
- **CO Powers:** ★Black Wave ★★Black Storm
- **Strength:** Damage enemies and recover HP simultaneously
- **Weakness:** CO Power takes a long time to charge up

FLAK
NEW
- **CO Power:** ★Brute Force ★★Barbaric Blow
- **Strength:** If it's raw strength you're after, he's your man
- **Weakness:** Sometimes misses targets completely

ADDER
NEW
- **CO Power:** ★Sideslip ★★Sidewinder
- **Strength:** CO Power shoots up faster than other characters
- **Weakness:** Not a powerful member of the Black Hole gang

LASH
NEW
- **CO Powers:** ★Terrain Tactics ★★Prime Tactics
- **Strength:** Crossing difficult terrain with ease and at speed
- **Weakness:** Lash is easily outgunned by strong enemies

STURM
- **CO Powers:** ★★★Meteor Strike
- **Strength:** Massively powerful and flexible strike force
- **Weakness:** Struggles in snowy conditions

ORANGE STAR

MAX
- **CO Powers:** ★Max Force ★★Max Blast
- **Strength:** Tanks and recon units are hard as nails
- **Weakness:** Long-range weapons are naff

ANDY
- **CO Powers:** ★Hyper Repair ★★Hyper Upgrade
- **Strength:** All-rounder and has healing abilities
- **Weakness:** Jack-of-all-trades but master of none

SAMI
- **CO Powers:** ★Double Time ★★Victory March
- **Strength:** Ground troops are massively mobile and tough as a pari of old boots
- **Weakness:** Vehicle units are rubbish in face-to-face fights

WHO'S IN COMMAND?

Throughout the Campaign mode you get to play as any of the commanding officers from Orange Star, Blue Moon, Yellow Comet and Green Earth. But defeat the new and unique Black Hole COs in AW2 and you get the option to buy them with points you earn from winning battles.

Once you've bought them in Haichi's store you can use any CO in the War Room missions and multiplayer games. Become a master of all of them!

GREEN EARTH

DRAKE
- **CO Powers:** ★Tsunami ★★Typhoon
- **Strength:** Ships and submarines are second to none
- **Weakness:** Air units are easily shot down and beaten in dogfights

EAGLE
- **CO Powers:** ★Lightning Strike ★★Lightning Drive
- **Strength:** King of the skies. His airborne units are amazing
- **Weakness:** Put him to sea and he's like a fish out of water

JESS
NEW
- **CO Powers:** ★Turbo Charge ★★Overdrive
- **Strength:** Rock-solid tanks, artillery, anti-air, missiles and rockets
- **Weakness:** Inferior foot soldiers, aircraft and naval units

BLUE MOON

SENSEI
NEW
- **CO Powers:** ★Copter Command ★★Airborne Assault
- **Strength:** Battle Copters and Infantry are tough and impressively mobile
- **Weakness:** Indirect-firing units aren't much cop

OLAF
- **CO Powers:** ★Blizzard ★★Winter Fury
- **Strength:** He can operate unhindered in the snow
- **Weakness:** A drop of rain and he's like a fish out of water

COLIN
NEW
- **CO Powers:** ★Gold Rush ★★Power Of Money
- **Strength:** His troops are cheap as chips and he rakes in the cash
- **Weakness:** The attack strength of his units isn't huge

GRIT
- **CO Powers:** ★Snipe Attack ★★Super Snipe
- **Strength:** Master of long-range weapon offensives
- **Weakness:** In close combat he suffers a lot of damage

YELLOW COMET

SONJA
- **CO Powers:** ★Enhanced Vision ★★Power Break
- **Strength:** Can conceal the HP of her army from enemy
- **Weakness:** Attack and defensive capabilities are poor

KANBEI
- **CO Powers:** ★Morale Boost ★★Samurai Spirit
- **Strength:** All troops are tough and strong when attacked
- **Weakness:** Units are mega pricey to manufacture

IT'S A KNOCKOUT

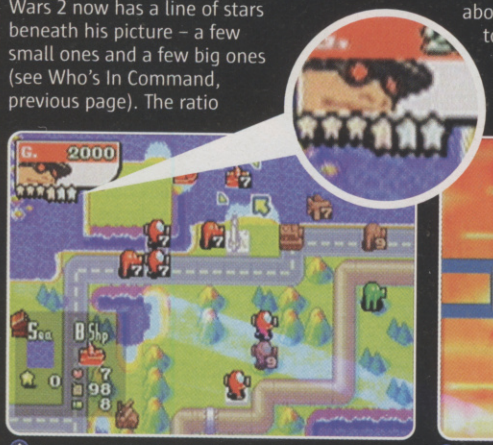
In the original Advance Wars each CO was gifted with a unique special ability that they could unleash during battle.

But you could only use your über-attack after you'd engaged in a certain number of conflicts on the battlefield. And there was never any way of gauging when your special ability was even close to being fully charged.

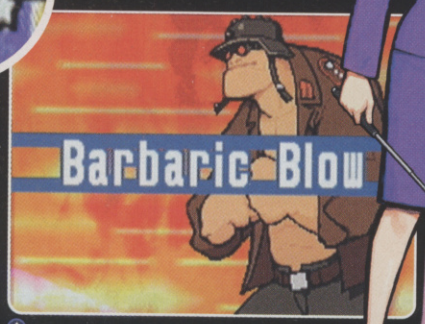
In contrast, each CO in Advance Wars 2 now has a line of stars beneath his picture – a few small ones and a few big ones (see Who's In Command, previous page). The ratio varies depending on which commanding officer you're using. This new meter acts as a guide to how much CO energy you've got stored up.

Every time you have a fight the stars start filling up from left to right. Once the first three are full you can let loose with your normal CO Power. But if you can hold out and wait for the next three stars to fill up, you can now kick ass with a new Super CO Power!

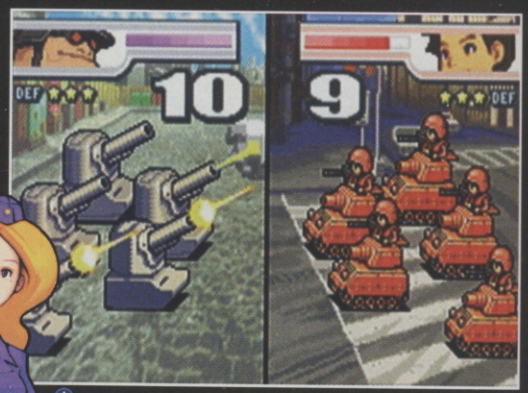
In the last game you weren't rewarded for being patient. That's all changed. You now need to think more strategically about when and which special attack to use. Do you wait and possibly get stomped early on, or hold your ground and let rip with a killer blow several days into battle?



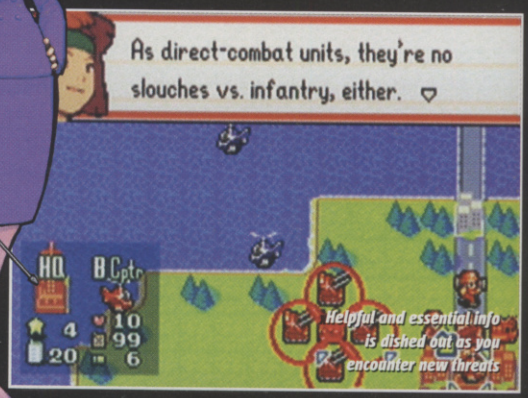
Keep an eye fixed on the CO Power Meter at all times

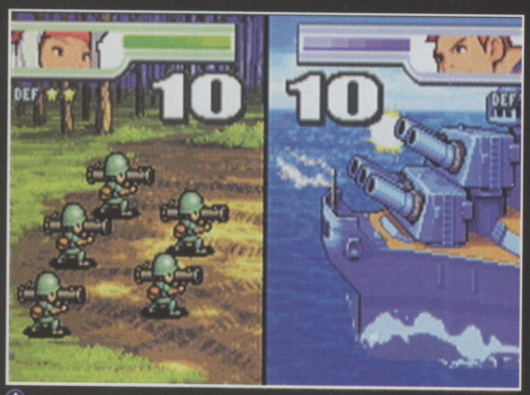


Bide your time, then cripple your enemy



Flak's artillery units give Orange Star's tanks a proper battering





Turn-based handheld action doesn't get much more exhilarating than Nintendo's new strategy stunner

ADVANCED WARFARE

There are heaps of new facilities and weapons that you need to learn about in order to become an Advance Wars master tactician. They range from giant Laser Cannons to Laboratories; here are a few that caught our attention first time out.

MISSILE SILOS

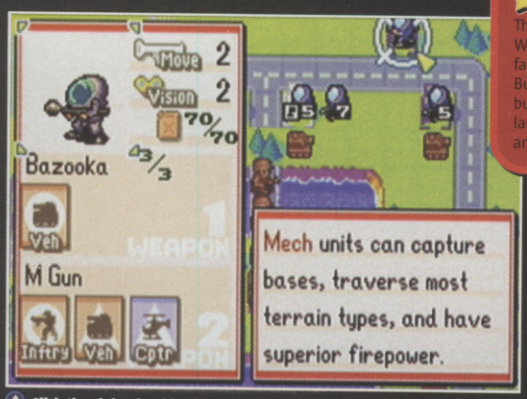
The first Infantry unit to land on a Missile Silo square can immediately launch a devastating rocket to anywhere on the battlefield. But each Silo can only fire one missile. Use your attack wisely and take out as many units as possible with one shot.

NEO TANKS

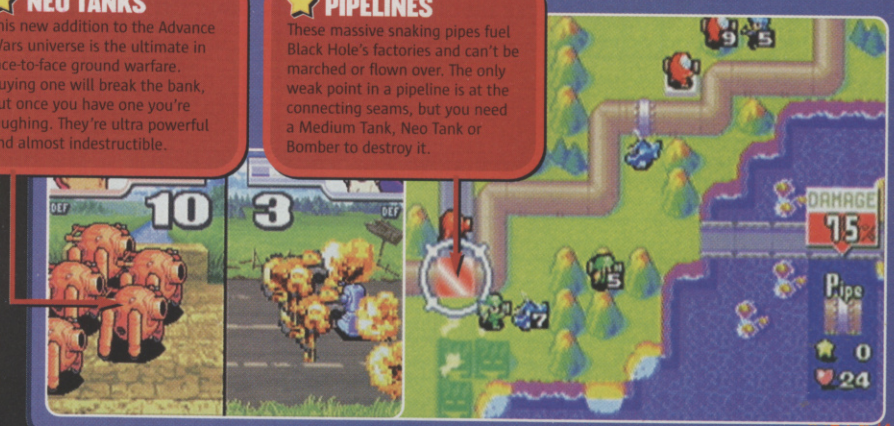
This new addition to the Advance Wars universe is the ultimate in face-to-face ground warfare. Buying one will break the bank, but once you have one you're laughing. They're ultra powerful and almost indestructible.

PIPELINES

These massive snaking pipes fuel Black Hole's factories and can't be marched or flown over. The only weak point in a pipeline is at the connecting seams, but you need a Medium Tank, Neo Tank or Bomber to destroy it.



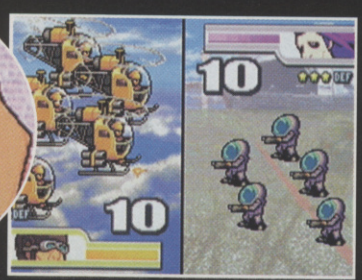
Click the right shoulder button to bring up specific details on each unit



DRESSED TO KILL

Who says Army Commanders can't be trendy? In Advance Wars 2 you can edit the appearance of every CO unlocked in battle or bought from Heichi's shop.

Give your favourite COs snazzy new threads. We're not sure about the braces, though



All the basics from the first game are included here in the same way, so old Advance Wars experts should have no excuses for not picking up all the new features and tactics in a flash

CVG OPINION

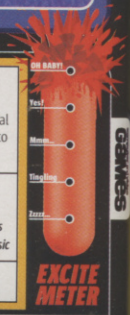
Rammed with new addictive and strategic situations. If the first game robbed you of a social life, AW2 will transform you into a fully-fledged hermit. **Mike**

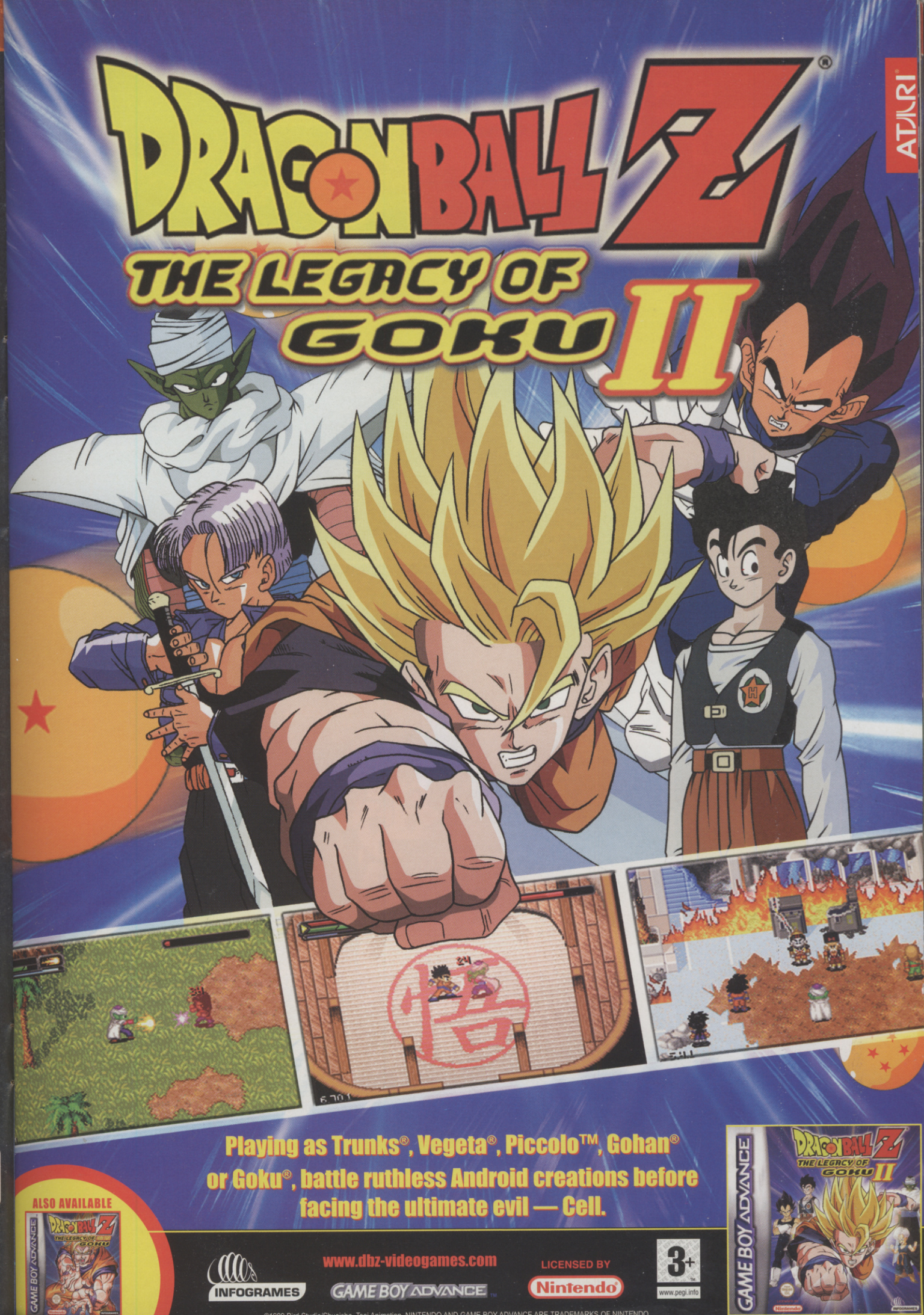
WE LOVE

- The mean Black Hole COs
- All the exciting new units
- Loads of new types of missions
- Improved presentation and music

WE HATE

- No new game modes

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BREATH OF FIRE™ DRAGON QUARTER

PUBLISHER
CAPCOM
DEVELOPER
CAPCOM
OUT: OCTOBER

IN A NUTSHELL

Another classic RPG series finally makes it to PS2. Dragon Quarter may be closer to FFVII-style post-apocalyptic realism than the sword and sorcery themes of previous BOF games, but familiar characters Ryu and Nina return, and so do the dragons.

WWW.CAPCOM.COM

Ranger Ryu is lower than the dirt on a snake's belly. In the brutal hierarchy of Deep Earth, Ryu's D-ratio of 1/8192 marks him as a snivelling grunt, fit only for hunting down Genic monsters, the mutant by-products of BioCorp experimentation.

After a simple fetch-and-carry mission goes horribly wrong Ryu is mysteriously infused with dragon powers that make him go all red and tingly. Trudging through the early levels you feel almost as beaten down as pre-dragon Ryu. The paucity of save points will make you cry hot tears of frustration each time your party gets wiped out and you have to start all over again.

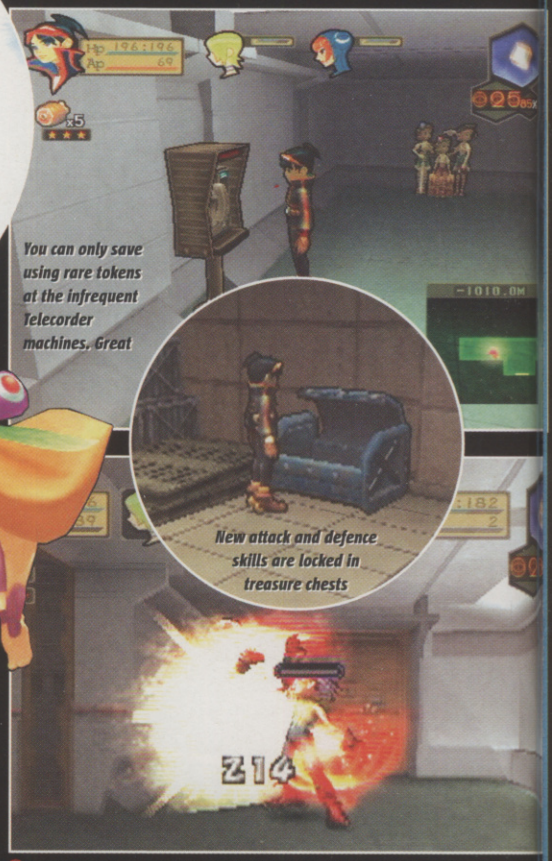
CROUCHING ANT, HIDDEN DRAGON

The cel-shaded graphics and enchanting huge-eyed characters are a departure from

Aggression is rewarded. If you attack first you will earn a vital extra turn

Avoid entering into too many monster encounters and your Stats will suffer

Apparently the more times you restart the game the more secret scenes will be revealed



You can only save using rare tokens at the infrequent Telecorder machines. Great

New attack and defence skills are locked in treasure chests

Throw raw meat to lure the enemy then blow them up with a stick o' dynamite

Use Ryu's Dragon abilities sparingly or the killjoy D-Counter will end it all

ALIEN ANT FARM

You think you've got it all figured out, then things go a bit mad when you rescue a fairy trapped in a BioCorp lab. She repays you by rewarding you with a franchise in the fairy family business. The ruthlessly efficient gossamer-winged entrepreneur shows you the secret to underground money-making with an ant colony.

Make sure you aren't fooled by the cuteness. This little lady is one tough business fairy

Your first duty is to interview potential ant labourers. Their CVs are suitably tiny

For every Genic you slay during gameplay, your ant workforce earns itself some more money

The gothic look of bygone BOF has been left behind in favour of a more colourful style

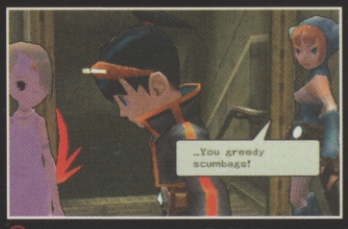
DRAGON WARRIORS

The turn-based combat system is more instinctive than it has been in previous Breath Of Fire games. Each character in your party has a set number of AP points to use per turn, depending on his or her current Stat level. There are three levels of attack, expending 10, 20 and 30 AP points respectively.

You can opt to use all your character's AP points at once to unleash a powerful attack...

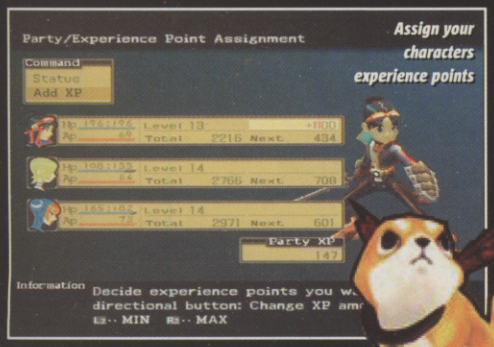
...Or you can choose a weaker attack, saving enough AP points for a dignified retreat

Skills can be assigned to each character's weapons and clothing



Oh dear, someone's run off with the doughnuts again. Happens all the time at CVG too

Good to see the role-player tradition of shopping still thrives underground



Assign your characters experience points

the old-fashioned gothic look of previous BOF games. The traditional top-down viewpoint has been ditched in favour of a user-friendly third-person 3D camera, fully controllable via the right analog stick.

Random battles have been replaced by the all-new PETS engine, which apparently stands for Positive Encountered Tactics System. With PETS, you can see enemies as they approach and plan your battle strategy accordingly.

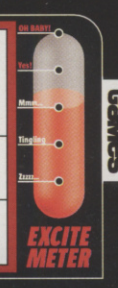
One less welcome innovation is the dreaded D-Counter which kicks in once Ryu gets his dragon mojo working. Each time you use Ryu's awesome D-Dive move in battle the counter advances. It also creeps up the more time you take exploring and levelling up. Once the counter reaches 100 per cent it's Game Over, with no chance of a reset.

A strange way to treat loyal BOF fans and newcomers alike.

CVG OPINION The fifth BOF game boasts some welcome innovations in terms of gameplay and graphics, but did they really have to make it so unforgiving? **Maura**

WE LOVE
- Ant colony mini-game
- Emotional story line
- Excellent battle system

WE HATE
- Not enough save points
- No speech
- Cruel D-Counter limits fun



GAMES

- PUBLISHER MIDWAY
- DEVELOPER MIDWAY
- OUT: AUGUST

1-4

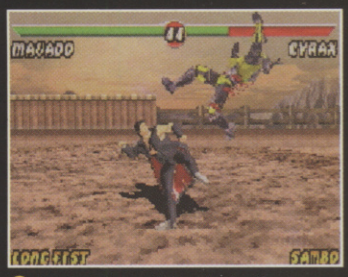
WWW.MIDWAY.COM

MORTAL KOMBAT TOURNAMENT EDITION

What better way to celebrate GBA's transition from non-back-lit kid's toy to fully illuminated lifestyle accessory than with an enhanced and souped-up version of everybody's favourite blood-soaked fighter? Chock full of new features, this new MK looks on track to serve up a grizzly fatality to all other handheld fighters.

The biggest addition sees you pitching your fighter and a mate's against two rivals. Fights are two versus two and while we're yet to see this feature running, it's got our blood boiling in anticipation. Other new features include practice rounds, brand new characters, improved visuals and the ability to gamble your hard-earned 'koins' to win and unlock extras.

Bo Rai Cho burns Scorpion's feet with his own bile. How delightful...



The character models and animations are now much sexier than previously

Fighting with razor-sharp blades brings about the largest amount of carnage. We like!

WE LOVE
- Multiplayer fighting
- Gambling koins in battles
- Improved visuals

WE HATE
- Still tricky with GBA buttons
- It's out quite soon after Deadly Alliance

GAMES

Unlimited Saga

PUBLISHER
ATARI
DEVELOPER
SQUARE ENIX
OUT: SEPTEMBER

ONLINE GAMING

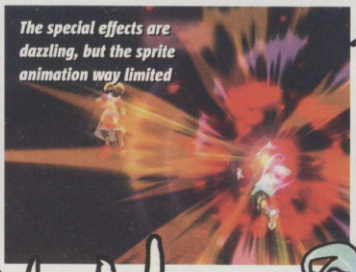
IN A NUTSHELL

Get ready to buckle up and blast off with an English language version of the full Unlimited Saga game. Be warned: you may come away with your mind destroyed but your interest will be piqued.

WWW.U-SAGA.COM

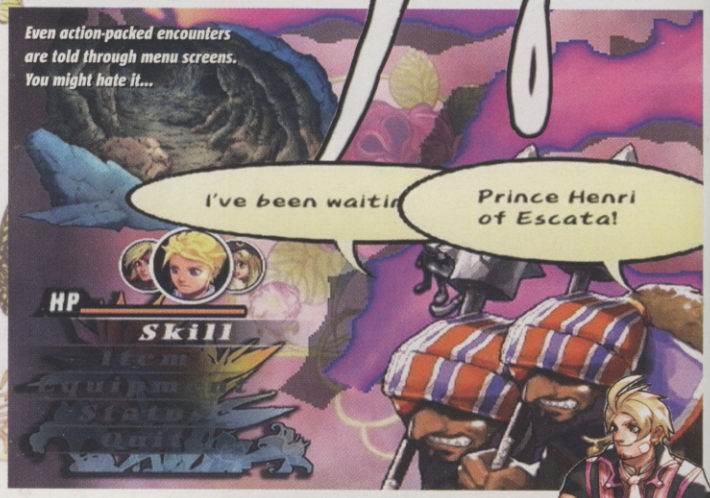
UPDATE!

Any lurking beasts show up as you pass, even if they don't attack - this time!



The special effects are dazzling, but the sprite animation way limited

Kurt gets vicious with this bubble-spewing Merman creature



Even action-packed encounters are told through menu screens. You might hate it...

Rookie boxers don't expect to beat Lennox Lewis on their first foray in the ring. Nobel Prize-winning scientists don't crack the human genome after just half an hour.

The same goes for Unlimited Saga: it's like learning a new discipline, not merely playing a videogame. Casual players, run away now and leave us grown-up role-players to it.

SEVENTH HEAVEN?

There are seven playable characters and each has his or her own 40-hour-plus quest. Rather than simply telling the same story from different perspectives, the heroes' games all play very differently. Laura's, for instance, is closest to a traditional RPG. Judy's adventure is all about learning magic to become a genius witch. Armic's is about snaffling and forging rare items. Each adventure is full of choices that you must make to shape the quest.

What players will initially find most head-popping is that, aside from the battles, the game is played out in static screens. You still do all the stuff you'd normally do in an RPG, like chat with locals, shop for equipment and recruit new heroes, but it's all done via beautifully illustrated menu screens. Moving around the area maps is static too, and reminiscent of a board game. You move your token and then take actions on each square.

All this plus an insane level of depth to the battles and character development amounts to a bold new step for the hardcore role-player, but a difficult move for most to take. CVG

Enemy weaknesses are very complicated

Don't panic: you can avoid the spikes by stopping the trap reel on a safe icon

Different weapons call up different attack reels with varied icons on them

Some characters can blast through locked doors, others have to find keys

CLUCK CLUCK

With a marketing campaign that includes the challenge: "You call yourself chicken, or hardcore?" Unlimited Saga is clearly aimed at the most advanced role-playing minds on Earth. The gameplay mechanics go far beyond any traditional console role-player's and are as intriguing as they are initially baffling. Here's the briefest introduction as to what to expect.

You need to use a relevant action on each map square to examine it and find objects

Admittedly there's no running about, but there's still plenty of exploration

Status effects and the way you level up are brain-punishing

Use the 'Hold' command to link combos and reels together

CVG OPINION

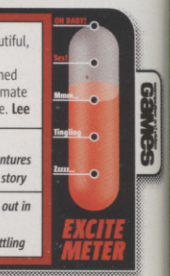
As unforgiving as it is beautiful, this is sure to prove the meatiest fodder for hardened role-players up for the ultimate test of their gaming mettle. **Lee**

WE LOVE

- Gorgeous static visuals
- Seven very different adventures
- Freeform – you make the story

WE HATE

- The exploration is played out in static screens
- Unbelievably complex battling



Create your own arena using the Level Editor. Make it better than ours!

The tantalising Hill Climb mode, in which you must indeed climb a hill

FMX FREESTYLE METAL X

- PUBLISHER MIDWAY
- DEVELOPER DEIBUS STUDIOS UK
- OUT: AUGUST

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

No famous names, just 'sick' stunts on motocross bikes in the much-copied Tony Hawk's style. No grinding – you'd have to be kidding – but everything else here will be familiar to any extreme sports aficionado.

WWW.MIDWAY.COM

You have to admire Midway for the classics it's given us over the years – Rampage and Robotron, Smash TV, NBA Jam and Mortal Kombat... Things have got a little shaky of late, but its remakes – of Spy Hunter, for example – have been sweet.

So it's a little sad to find Freestyle Metal X on its roster, well produced though it is. Trouble is, you've been here so many times before, on a board, blades or BMX. Just about the only thing that's different is motorbike angle, but even that isn't particularly new.

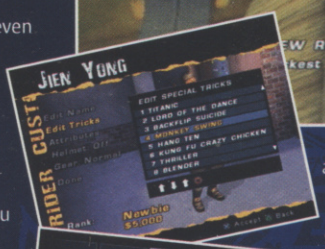
Oh crap, I knew I should have left me mobile back at the garage!

There are opportunities to set records in all sorts of ways

SPEED FREAK

To silence the critics Metal X is rammed with every possible option you could list for an extreme sports title. You can race, go for the hill climb, compete to get the big air, or take to freestylin' around the genuinely huge levels. Guess they have to be that big, since you're on wheels that go quite a lot faster than your average BMX.

Going full throttle at ramps and halfpipes is a thrill all of its own – revving the bike before releasing the front brake makes you feel like a regular daredevil. Of course with speed comes really big air – another big reason to shout "Yeah!" and throw the horns.



There's a great deal to explore beneath the surface of Freestyle Metal X

Speaking of horns, the soundtrack to all this motocross mayhem is unabashed heavy metal forged in the '80s. So if you're not big on Motörhead, Mötley Crüe, Megadeth and Twisted Sister, this could be hell for your ears.

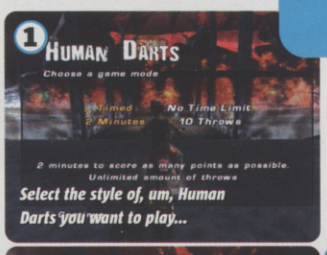
OVERKILL

Metal X really makes you work for your rewards. Only one level, the Rodeo Rise ranch, is open to begin with. There's some hefty exploring to do in order to collect enough bundles of cash (floating icons – what else?) to gain you access to other areas.

This strict ruling also applies to the unlockable characters, nine in total, whom you must beat in a race around specific levels to release. But strict is good, especially if the rewards are worth it. If Human Darts is anything to go by, Metal X has found the right sort of balance.

The really big bonuses live high up in the air

IT'S... INHUMAN!



Lacking in humour Metal X certainly is not. Aside from 'Wolf Whacking' (a superb piece of nonsense that features in the main game), the bonus game Human Darts is a stroke of insane genius.

You score points by launching riders from their saddles, at speed, into a pit while avoiding mines. It's so simple and so stupid you might wind up playing for hours...

CVG OPINION

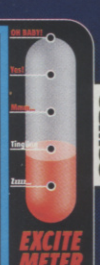
The least distinctive game from Midway's off-the-wall sports line-up. It's a classy enough effort, though, so we're giving it a bit more time. **Paul D**

WE LOVE

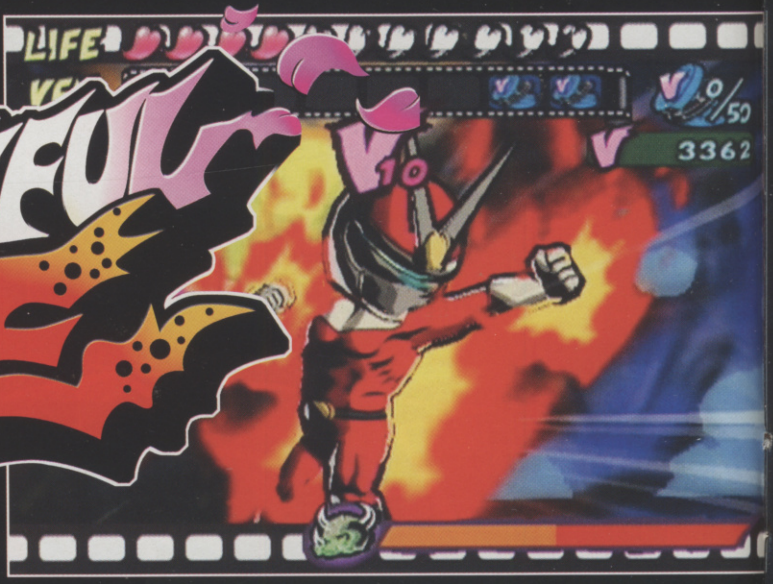
- Control of the bikes is good
- Goofy Jackass-style humour
- Big old places to burn around

WE HATE

- Too predictable for Midway
- Derivative, no matter what
- Pretty dreadful characters



VIEWTIFUL JOE



No, it's not a cutscene. This is what it looks like while you're playing. It's a one-of-a-kind game

PUBLISHER CAPCOM
DEVELOPER CAPCOM
OUT: OCTOBER 31

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

A firework of a fighting game! The brightest, most beautiful and explosive 2D beat 'em up we've ever clapped our eyes on *and* it plays like it looks. Gorgeously chaotic, but you never feel out of control.

WWW.CAPCOM.CO.JP/VJ

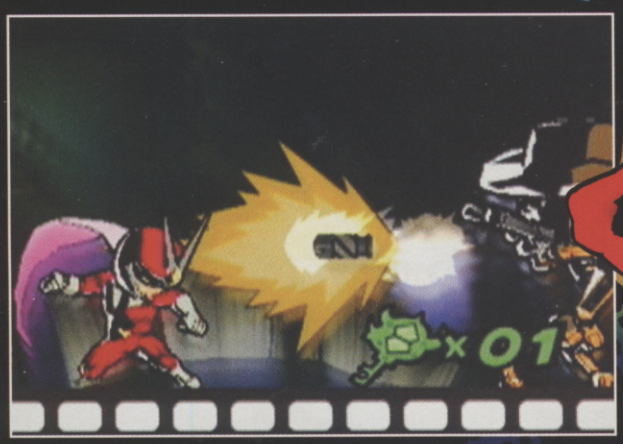
Let's cut to the chase. Viewtiful Joe is spectacular! Original, exciting... hell, it's the coolest cat on GameCube. How it looks, plays, sounds... the whole kit 'n' caboodle is razor sharp and unforgettable.

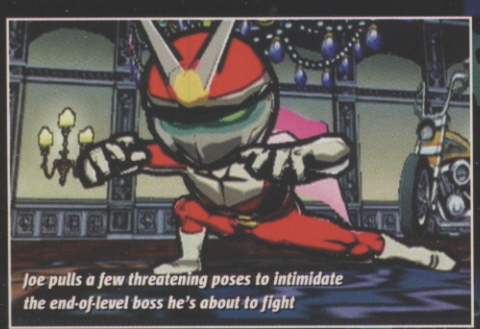
It's a comic book-style side-scrolling 2D beat 'em up. But this isn't any ordinary cel-shaded offering. Capcom's hyperactive brawler has a strikingly fresh look. Everything in shadow is painted jet black in true graphic novel style. Then there are all the mind-melting special effects and awe-inspiring animations.

The swarthy good looks will woo the pants off you. But Viewtiful Joe's breakneck fighting action and quirky time-bending puzzles are what really make it stand out from the crowd. We wish we could see your face when you first experience the bullet-time slow-mo brawls and brainteasers! It's *that* awesome.

Not enough people know or care about Viewtiful Joe yet to make it the superstar series that it deserves to become, but not for long if CVG's got anything to do with it. It's ambitious, in your face, against the grain – an experience unlike any other. Spread the word and hype it up. Joe is coming!

Wait for the bullet to get near and punch it back at your foe





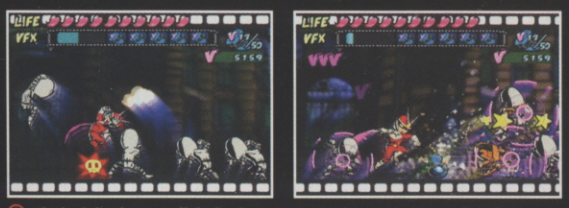
Joe pulls a few threatening poses to intimidate the end-of-level boss he's about to fight

HENSHIN-A-GO-GO-BABY!

Daunting? Yes. When you first see it up and running Viewtiful Joe is as intimidating as hell. The mixture of on-screen visual chaos and constant switching from Slow to Mach Speed to zoomed-in action is enough to do any onlooker's head in.

Thing is, when you're in there it's a whole different story. Joe is dead simple to control, and you quickly get used to all the special effects and changes in speed because you're fully in command. Sure, it's intense, but it's nothing to be afraid of.

When you slow time, explosions are longer, bigger and more powerful



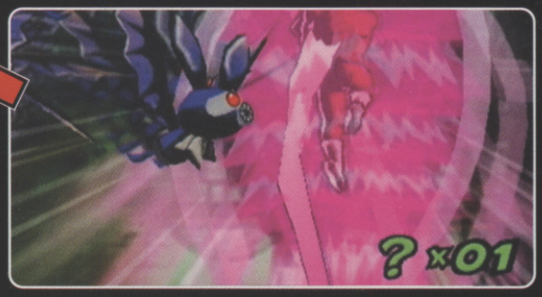
Hit the left trigger to fight in slow-mo. Spot where your enemy is going to strike, dodge and then counter. Rack up massive attack combos

Speed up the on-screen action. Joe's punches and kicks get faster and faster until he sets himself on fire!

Use Mach Speed to make propellers turn faster, and to solve puzzles too

Access an extra set of special moves by rotating the C-stick. The camera zooms in, restricting your vision. But for close combat there's no better way to fight than this

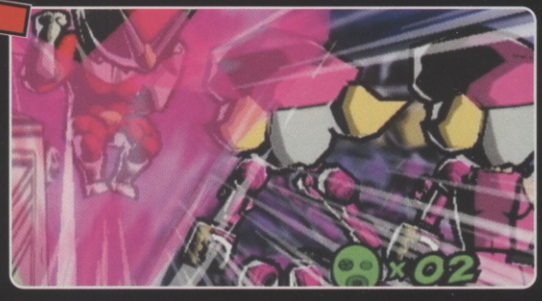
The spearhead attack. Joe corkscrews into the air. It's brilliant for busting through into new areas too



Joe unleashes a deadly 360° kick. Ideal when you find yourself surrounded

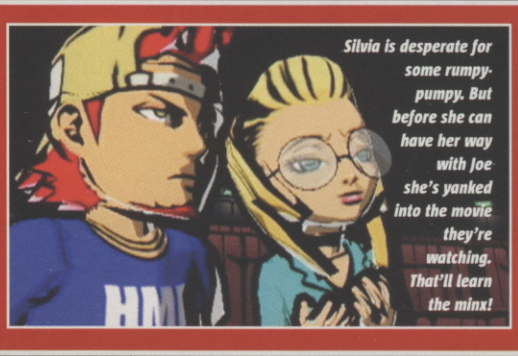
Hit and hold the punch button and Joe strings together a rapid-fire combo of devastating impact

In midair flick the C-stick in a semi-circular motion to trigger a fierce stomp manoeuvre that sends out shock waves



SAVING SILVIA

The concept and story line are just as quirky as the amazing oddball gameplay. Joe takes his bespectacled nymphomaniac girlfriend to see a film starring his hero, Captain Blue. She tries to get jiggy with Joe, who's only interested in watching the movie. Suddenly a giant evil dude grabs Silvia out of her seat and pulls her into the picture. Joe is also miraculously zapped into the screen and finds out that he's now the hero and that he must rescue his randy missus.



Silvia is desperate for some rumpy-pumpy. But before she can have her way with Joe she's yanked into the movie they're watching. That'll learn the minx!

Her beloved one gets sucked in too, but he's not helpless. Captain Blue gives him a special watch that enables him to transform into Viewtiful Joe

POINTS OF VIEW

ALL HEART
Life is precious and easily drained. Try to dodge attacks in Slow mode and hit incoming bullets back at enemies whenever possible. Hunt for hamburgers and meal deals to keep your energy topped up.

MOVIE MANIA
Collect 50 V-Film tokens scattered throughout a level. Once you have nabbed all of them the VFX Gauge fills up to the max, enabling you to use your special powers for ages. It's worth going out of your way to bag all those elusive wee tokens.

VIEWTIFUL STUFF
Evade enemy attacks and nail mental combos to rack up Viewtifuls. These rewards are the equivalent of hard cash. You can buy stuff in a Power-Up shop. The more skilful you are, the more Viewtifuls you earn and the more you get to spend. Buy new moves and weapons like the Voomerang!

SPECIAL FX
Whenever you use any of your Slow, Mach Speed or Zoom abilities the VFX bar decreases. If it empties you transform from Viewtiful to regular Joe. Wait for the first chunk on the VFX bar to fill up and you'll switch back into your superhero state.

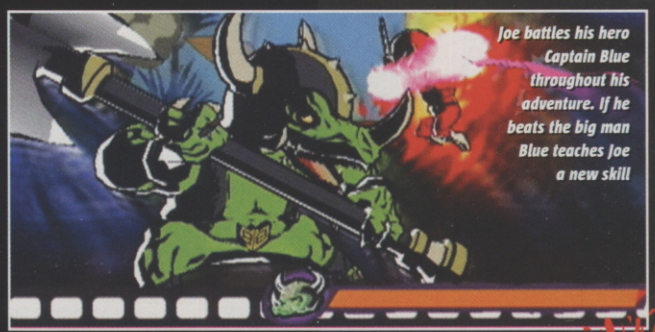
THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

CVG was surprised to encounter a small shoot 'em up section. But what's so amazing is that all the ideas from the fighting action have been successfully implemented and integrated into this shooting mini-level rather than simply tacked on. In fact it could be expanded and made into an entire game. It's that impressive.

Joe can use all of his special abilities while piloting his convertible aircraft. Make sure you make the most of them

A FIGHT TO REMEMBER

Every character that pops up leaves a lasting impression. Especially the bosses. They're all unique and charismatic, and the end-of-level fights are spectacular.



Joe battles his hero Captain Blue throughout his adventure. If he beats the big man Blue teaches Joe a new skill

This axe-lobbing, bomb-dropping, short-tempered giant green rhino is one mean sonuvabitch

CVG OPINION
This is a game that fizzes and bubbles with energy. Viewtiful Joe deserves to become a GameCube superhero. Insanely innovative and stylish! **Mike**

WE LOVE
- Sparkling graphics and beautiful animation
- Mental time-altering action
- It effervesces. That's good

WE HATE
- Exclusivity to GameCube

MORE MUSCLE FOR YOUR DVD

DERAILED OUT 11|08|03 VAN DAMME BOXSET OUT 11|08|03 OUT FOR A KILL OUT 18|08|03 HALF PAST DEAD OUT 08|09|03

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BROKEN SWORD
THE SLEEPING DRAGON

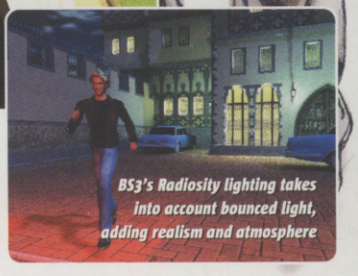
- PUBLISHER THQ
- DEVELOPER REVOLUTION
- OUT: OCTOBER

IN A NUTSHELL

George and Nico return to unravel more fiendish conspiracies and ancient mysteries. The third in the 2D point-and-click series evolves into 3D, but gameplay remains a familiar mix of exploration, puzzling and action.

XBOX
PC
GC

WWW.REVOLUTION.CO.UK



BS3's Radiosity lighting takes into account bounced light, adding realism and atmosphere

Conspiracy theories. Did Hitler really die in 1945? Who killed Dreamcast? We love 'em. Which is why we're so fond of the Broken Sword games – you get to unravel some of history's greatest mysteries from the comfort of your sofa.

Only things are a bit different for the series' third outing as BS3 has also gone 3D – yet retained a more traditional, puzzle-style approach to armchair Indiana adventuring. Instead of Lara-style polygon-perfect prancing and endless instant death scenarios, BS3 is more forgiving and thoughtful.

THE THINKING MAN'S LARA

You're free to move your character around, and the four context-sensitive icons on screen (which relate to the buttons on your pad) let you know when you can interact with objects or perform actions. No blundering about – you know exactly when you can pull this crate or shimmy along that ledge.

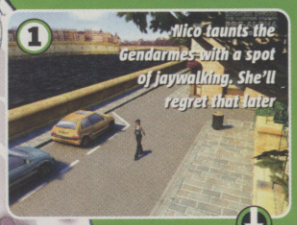
Even the action events aren't too punishing. In one scene (see box) Nico is held at pistol-point in a kitchen. An icon appears twice for a few seconds during dialogue – hit the button on time and she lashes out with a pan or a fridge door. Fail or run away and she's shot, but the game restarts 30 seconds earlier.

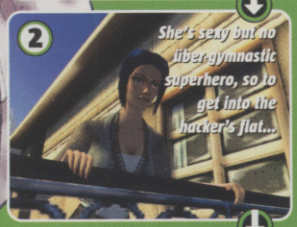
BS3 relies more on narrative during gameplay instead of long cutscenes to develop the story. We'll not spoil it, but if you enjoyed books like Umberto Eco's Foucault's Pendulum or Heaven's Mirror, you'll be intrigued. We are.

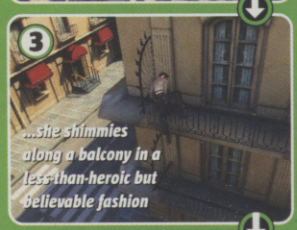
LARA-NICO

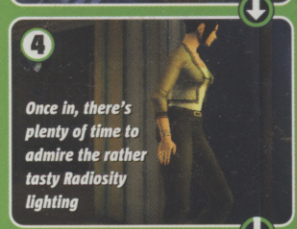
Meanwhile, across the Channel in France, Nico's tracking down a hacker who may have cracked the Voynich mystery, a coded manuscript that some think contains the secrets of alchemy and even the recipe for the Elixir Of Life.

Needless to say these shenanigans spell trouble for Nico, who gets framed for murder. And in Paris. Well fancy that. Twice in one year? Seems videogames have a low opinion of the French criminal justice system.









GEORGE OF THE JUNGLE

Plot is king in Broken Sword games, and Sleeping Dragon is no exception, building on the earlier titles and adapting arcane enigmas that have intrigued generations of conspiracy theorists.

So yes, the Knights Templar return. Broken Sword 3 features a cliffhanger moment every hour or so between George and Nico as they investigate different connecting leads, starting with reports of a strange machine producing energy from nothing, built by a professor deep in the African Congo...

George's crashed plane teeters on a cliff edge, prompting a crate-pushing puzzle

Thinking and drinking Australian provides some early comic relief – literally...

...but all George's efforts end up going belly-up thanks to his dim-witted Antipodean pilot

Our hero is left to negotiate a route to the Prof's base, only to hear him murdered first

DOUBLE TEAM

George and Nico team up later on for a stealth section, one of a number of familiar elements and features from earlier instalments.

Fans will enjoy the in-jokes, incidental characters and even areas reprised from the point-and-click adventures.

When together, there's no character zapping. But they use Nico's charms to distract a guard

If he's spotted sneaking in, he's just booted out, so Nico tries some more 'persuasive' dialogue

On her third attempt she simply snogs the guard – and is in a huff with George next time they meet

CVG OPINION

It's good to see such a popular and classic point-and-click series updated to 3D – we're just hoping it's not fluffed up like Monkey Island 4. **Pete**

WE LOVE

- Well-conceived plot
- New 3D direction for the series
- Clever six-track score

WE HATE

- Early puzzles are too basic
- Unsolved mysteries

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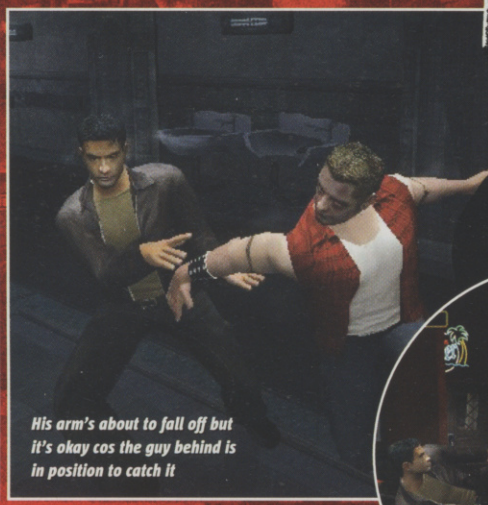
TRUE CRIME™

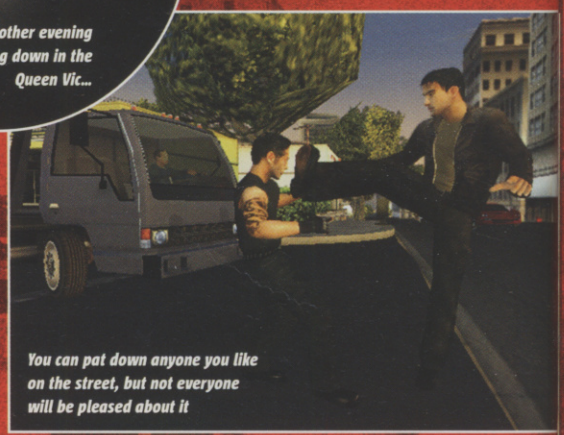
STREETS OF LA™

Cutting up the rozzers, LA-style

If you're too trigger-happy you'll only pay later, pal


His arm's about to fall off but it's okay cos the guy behind is in position to catch it

Just another evening going down in the Queen Vic...


You can pat down anyone you like on the street, but not everyone will be pleased about it

- PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION
- DEVELOPER: LUXOFLUX
- OUT: SEPTEMBER 19

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

Full hands-on with the crime-fighting tour-de-force that lets you be as good or bad as you choose. Expands on the basic structure of GTA and The Getaway with fully realised martial arts and shooting engines.

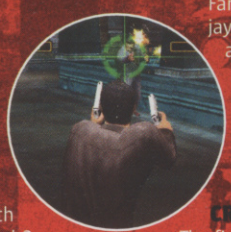
XBOX GC

WWW.TRUECRIMELA.COM

UPDATE!

Los Angeles, California. City of Angels, land of dreams, many of them shattered. The glittering façade camouflages some of the meanest streets this side of hell. The constant battle to keep Los Angelinos safe from the scumbags presents a sticky moral dilemma.

The only language the perps understand is violence, but go in too heavy-handed and you risk sinking to their level of cold-blooded depravity. Ride 'em too soft and you risk letting them literally get away with murder. Ain't free will a bitch?



Although there are many obvious similarities between True Crime and the likes of GTA and The Getaway (cars, guns and hookers being just three), one huge difference is the fact that this time around you're on the side of law and order. Or at least you're supposed to be. As renegade cop Nick Kang you get to bend the rules until they break in your sworn duty to bust the Russian and Chinese crime syndicates.

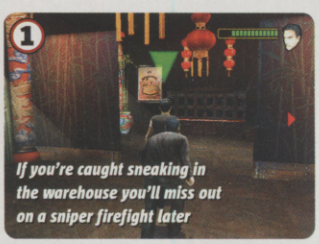
Fancy shooting dead a jaywalking granny or capping a few matronly melons at an anti-videogames rally? Go right ahead. But don't be surprised if your trigger-happy actions have consequences further on.

CRUISIN' FOR A BRUISIN'

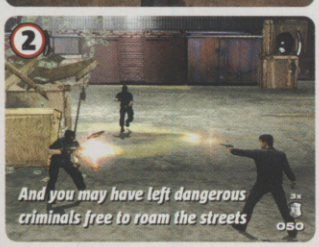
The first thing you notice when racing across the 240 square miles of authentic, continuously streamed LA is the sheer size of

The landmarks of LA are reproduced in stunning detail, sometimes with extra crispy cars

LA STORY



If you're caught sneaking in the warehouse you'll miss out on a sniper firefight later



And you may have left dangerous criminals free to roam the streets

The branching storyline, written by a team of Hollywood script writers, ensures that you never actually fail a mission.

If a gang member gives you a pasting in a fight you'll still go straight through to the next mission, but your defeat will have an impact on future gameplay and story elements.

Producer Chris Archer says: *"We're trying to make it a real experience. There's consequences for all things, that's the beauty of our game. If you do bad stuff and just go on rampages there's consequences to those actions."*

DIGGING DEEP

"We did a good job of the depth in each of the pieces. I think the coolest thing was the ability to make all of those things deep enough and to bring them all together. That was the hardest part, making them all cohesive so that they all worked together. It's not an easy thing to figure out, it took us a long time." Chris Archer

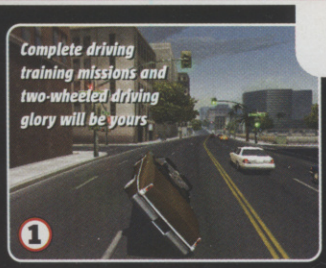
NO, NO, LIMITS

Chris Archer: *"We didn't take ourselves seriously and we also want people to just have a load of fun with it, so we don't have any timers on slo-mo diving, we don't have any ammo limits. You just shoot and there's no worry about picking up clips."*

Oh dear. Either he's heard that he has to leave sunny LA for Huddersfield or he's lost his winning lotto ticket...

Officer Kang takes a typically heavy handed approach to traffic control

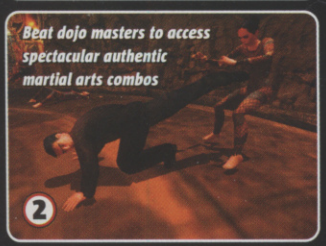
UNLOCK AND LOAD



Complete driving training missions and two-wheeled driving glory will be yours.

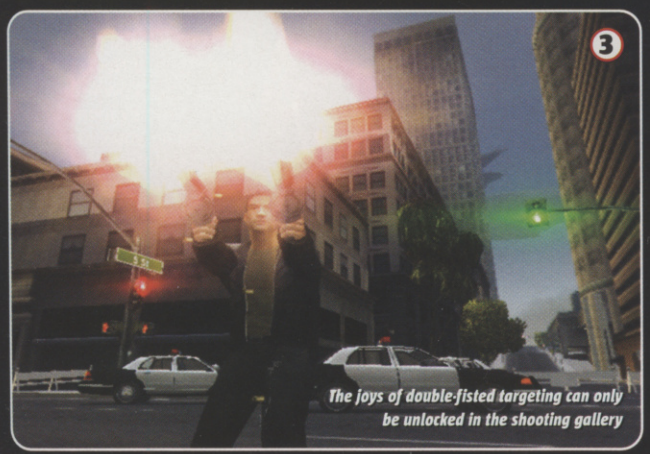
Although the basic controls for driving, shooting and ass whuppin' are pretty satisfying in their own right, there's plenty of scope to earn fancy upgrades by completing side missions for extra points.

With enough points you'll gain access to shooting galleries, dojos and racetracks where you can train and unlock combos.

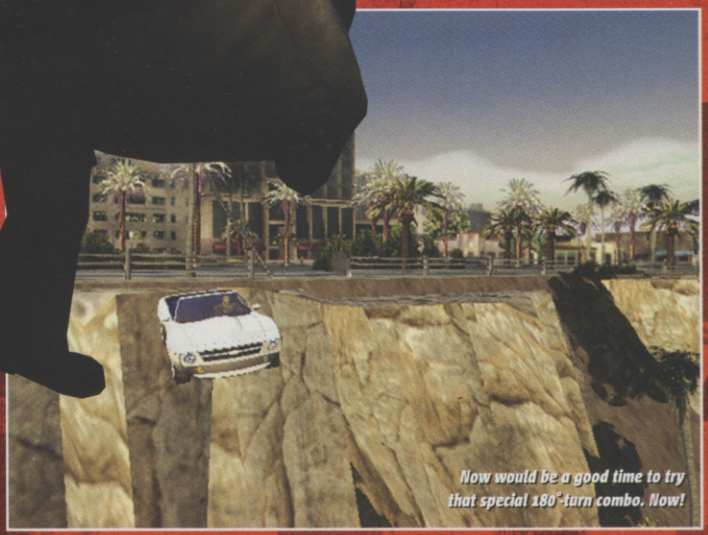


Beat dojo masters to access spectacular authentic martial arts combos

"There's this world of upgradeability, finishing moves, grapples and grapple combos and other stuff that you would expect in a high-end beat 'em-up. The driving is all about freedom, differences in the vehicles and the ability to get in and out of the car and solve these crimes which give you rewards, which are the upgrades." Chris Archer



The joys of double-fisted targeting can only be unlocked in the shooting gallery



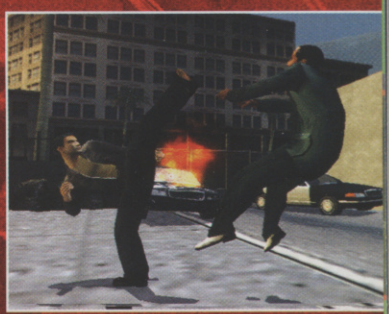
Now would be a good time to try that special 180°-turn combo. Now!

MASS DESTRUCTION

"Everything's destructible too, everything in the place breaks, except for maybe the frame in the wall, everything has some sort of breaking ability. Outside pretty much everything breaks up as well. Everything but the building walls can be run over or broken." Chris Archer

basic GTA gameplay structure True Crime aims to probe.

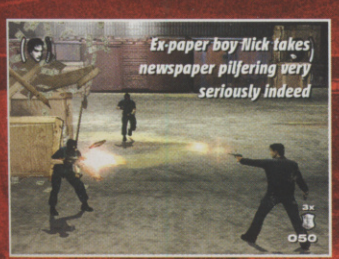
Behind some doors you'll simply discover a cutscene that moves the story along and concludes with a quick punch-up. Behind others you'll find entire mini-levels. One time you'll be plunged instantly into a savage scrap with a knife-wielding Triad maniac. At another location you'll be swiftly hushed into full-on stealth mode, trying to infiltrate a warehouse without alerting guards. All this within the first few missions of the 100-plus total the game has to offer.



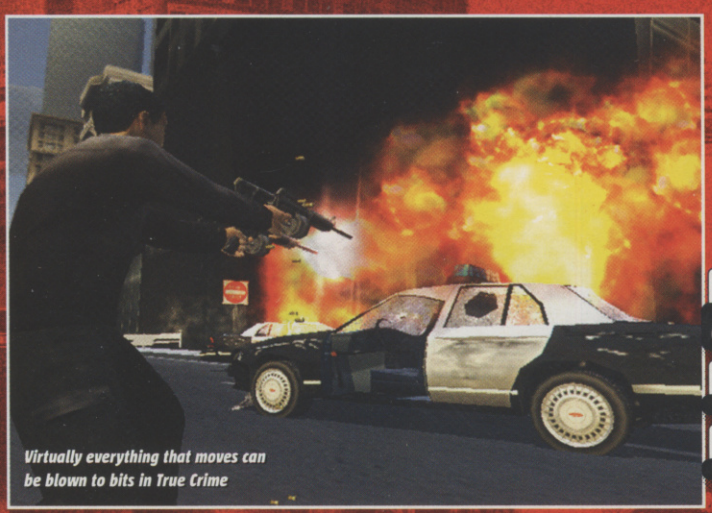
Nick shows that he really does have feet of flames. But not in the Michael Flatley sense

the city. The next thing that hits you is probably a lamppost or side of a house as you veer sharply off the road after admiring the view a little too much.

The car handling is extremely realistic, requiring concentration and a steady hand to avoid crashing every few feet. When you eventually reach your destination and go inside it becomes clear just how far beyond the



Ex-paper boy Nick takes newspaper pilfering very seriously indeed



Virtually everything that moves can be blown to bits in True Crime

It's an ambitious task to attempt to make a game that pulls together equally strong driving, shooting and fighting elements. Not impossible though, because based on what we've seen of True Crime so far, it may well succeed in seamlessly interweaving all three gaming styles. CVG

CVG OPINION

Plays like three massive games in one with the driving, fighting and shooting modes all given the same amount of respect. We can't wait to see more. **Maura**

WE LOVE

- Freedom to drive around LA
- Top voice-acting talent
- Thumping hip-hop soundtrack

WE HATE

- Slightly over-responsive driving controls and several clipping bugs, due to be tweaked

Certain enemies are only vulnerable to the attacks of specific forms

The colour palette may make you want to puke but look at the effects!

You run into fellow Shifter Janna and have to help her out. That's blondes for you

- PUBLISHER THQ
- DEVELOPER OUTRAGE GAMES
- OUT: OCTOBER

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

We're finally given the chance to get our sticky fingers on a full, if early, version of THQ's morph-tastic adventure. Change form and string together amazing combos in a surreal world that will pop your eyes.

PS2 XBOX

WWW.ALTERECHO.COM

UPDATE!

alter echo

There's good weird and there's bad weird. Good weird would be Jennifer Garner turning up at your door wearing a bunny suit and clutching a sachet of massage oil. Bad weird is the man who hangs around the supermarket car park with a copy of The People's Friend in one hand and his other hand rummaging in his trouser pocket.

Alter Echo is also weird. From what we've seen of it we're fairly confident it's going to go down the Jennifer Garner path, but you're going to have to be open to new gaming ideas.

DAISY CHAIN OF DEATH

You'll have noticed that Alter Echo is odd-looking. See, the game takes place on a living, breathing planet called Proteus. While it may look fairly benign at first, there's some *très* bad stuff going down. Lucky, then, that your hero Nevin can shape-shift seamlessly between Stealth, Gun and Mêlée Modes and even chain attacks between them.

This is the real meat of the game, and where Alter Echo really has the potential to dazzle the most. Each of Nevin's physical forms has its own specific moves, and by juggling enemies into the air you can link attacks into devastating chains.

There are loads of upgrades for new attacks and combos to learn as you play, more than making up for the comparatively simple puzzles.

It's looking neat, and our only worry at this stage is the niggly camera – this needs to be sorted if it's going to win over doubters. Please make it good, boys!

CRAZY/BEAUTIFUL

So what is it that makes Alter Echo such a strange little duck? The visuals certainly transport you into a world where it's clear the laws of physics as we know them don't apply. But it's more than just the visual style. There's lots of ingenuity on display in all aspects of the gameplay. Take a looky here.

A violent and colourful death is this demon's reward for crossing your path

Leap onto enemies then morph into Gun Mode and they stick to your gun!

You need to press R3 to activate Time Dilation to destroy multiple enemies at once

When you're in Stealth Mode it's possible to make yourself invisible for short periods

It's limbs akimbo as you dish out justice

CVG OPINION

Rock-solid action, an insane amount of combos and move upgrades, and some neat ideas. But will it please less open-minded action game fans? **Lee**

WE LOVE

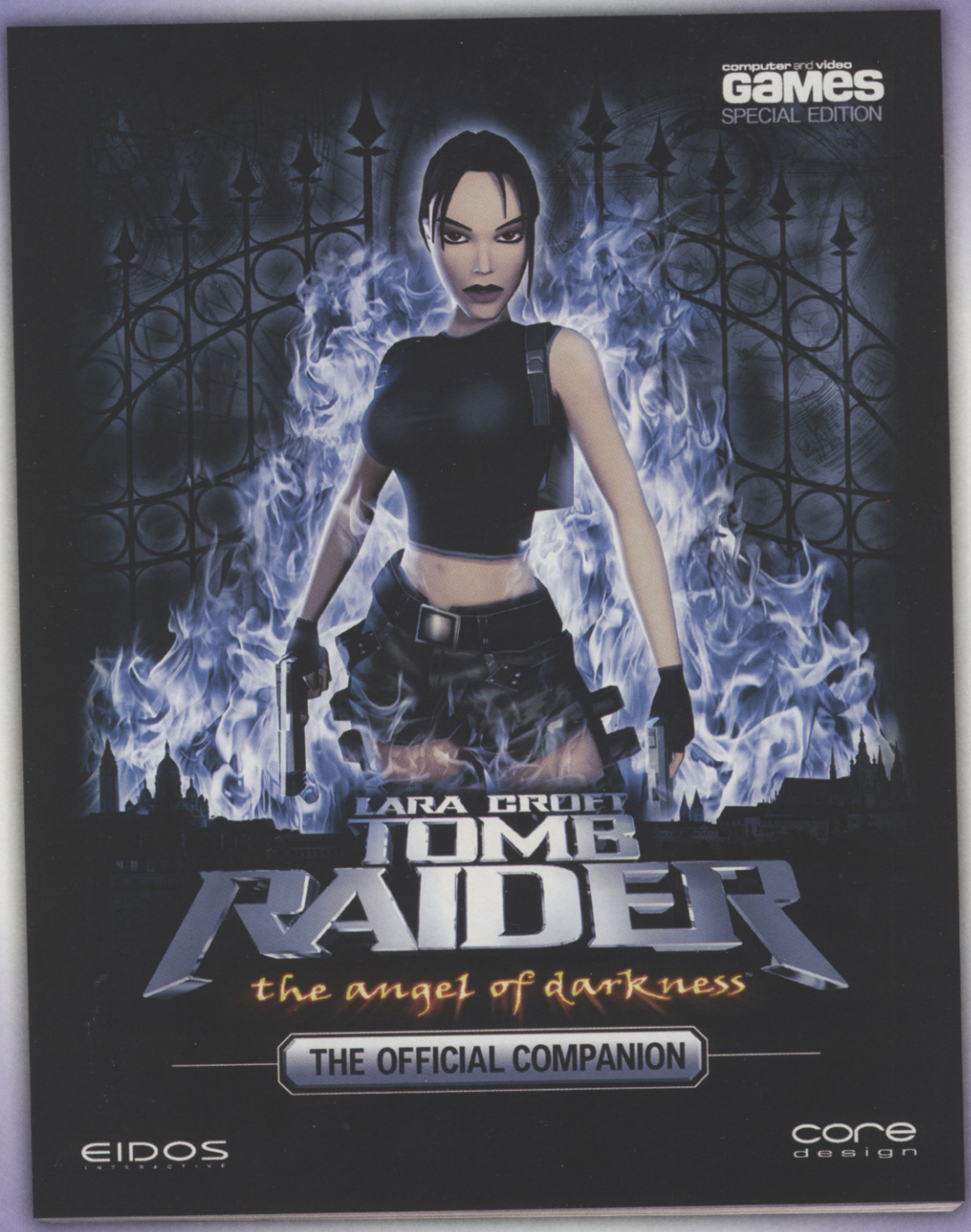
- Interesting gameplay ideas
- Chain attacks between forms
- Nevin's wisecracking

WE HATE

- Its looks may put some off
- Camera needs some tweaking
- No direct control in Time Dilation

EXCITE METER

GO BEHIND THE SCENES OF LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS



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AT ALL GOOD NEWSAGENTS

CHALLENGE CVG

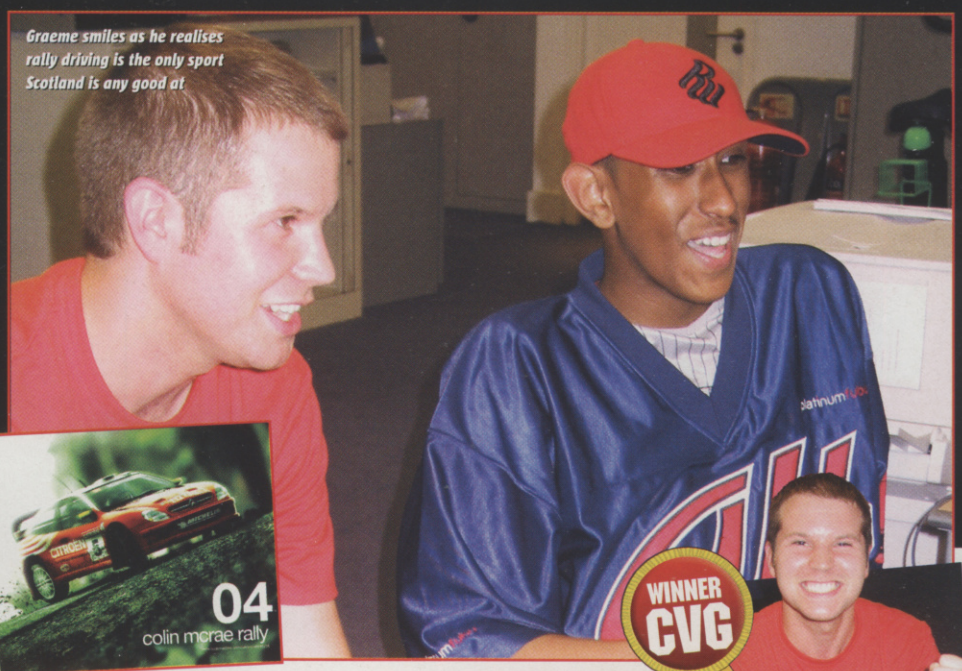
GRAEME BOYD VS MOHAMMED ELSAYED

WET-BEHIND-THE-EARS WRITER GRAEME REPRESENTS THE PINNACLE OF SCOTTISH RACING IN HIS FIRST EVER CHALLENGE...

KNOW YOUR PLACE, WORK EXPERIENCE BOY!

When Mohammed Elsayed from Battersea came to the CVG offices he never thought he'd be sliding around in the mud. But we decided a blast through the dirt of Codemasters' Colin McRae Rally 04 would be a good way to test his gaming skills, and since our new staff writer Graeme hails from McRae's homeland of Scotland, who better, we thought, to represent CVG?

After early mind games from Mohammed, who claimed he was "rubbish" at driving games before beating the lap record on one of the stages, Graeme swore he could feel the skills of his fellow countryman being channelled through his joypad. Gentlemen, start your engines...



Graeme smiles as he realises rally driving is the only sport Scotland is any good at

Graeme decides on a 'short cut' through the trees

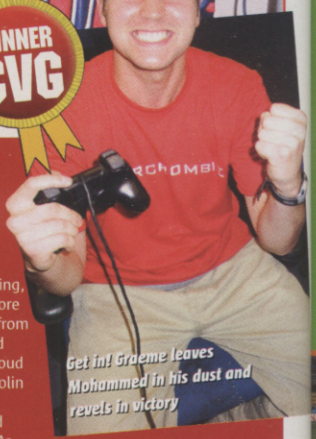
Oh, Graeme. It's all going wrong for CVG again...

1 ROUND ONE: EASY STAGE, AUSTRALIA

Mohammed got to pick the first stage and opted for the arid tracks of Australia. Graeme chose the power of the four-wheel-drive Subaru Impreza and Mohammed plumped for the agility of the two-wheel drive MG ZR.

"Yiv nae chunce, pal." Graeme exuded a Braveheart confidence at the starting line, complacent in the extra horsepower growling under his rather large hood. However, the manoeuvrability and acceleration of Mohammed's titchy car proved valuable on the loose surface. While Graeme introduced his bumper to the local foliage, Mohammed screamed to cocky, distasteful victory.

THE FINAL RESULT: GRAEME IS THE CHAMP

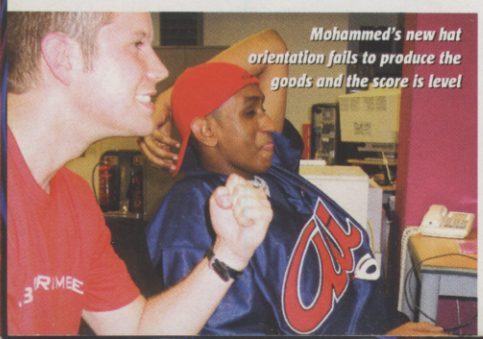


Get in! Graeme leaves Mohammed in his dust and revels in victory

The pride of Scotland is one thing, but the pride of CVG is even more important. After coming back from a first round defeat Graeme did us, and his country [yawn], proud by learning the intricacies of Colin McRae Rally 04's new and improved handling physics and keeping calm under pressure. As Mohammed sulked into his baseball cap and mourned the thorough ribbing he is sure to get from his mates, we were sure we could hear the skirl of the bagpipes in the distance...

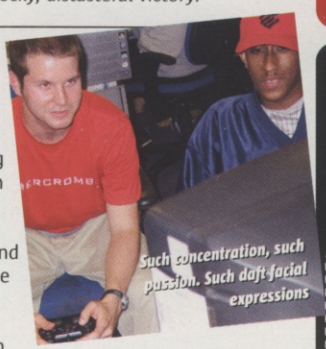
2 ROUND TWO: SUPER SPECIAL STAGE, UNITED STATES

Now spitting trash-talk like a rubbish dump with verbal diarrhoea, Mohammed casually reversed his baseball cap. The improved physics engine has made handling more realistic and Graeme, having skidded around Aberdeen in a one-litre Nissan Micra for five years, used his experience to master it. Mohammed, only 15, still managed to slither lithely around sharp bends like a trout on an ice rink but struggled to keep up on the straights. Even a last-second crash that provoked bizarre Northern profanities from Graeme couldn't stop him levelling the scores.



Mohammed's new hat orientation fails to produce the goods and the score is level

3 ROUND THREE: RALLY STAGE, UK



Such concentration, such passion. Such daft facial expressions

For the deciding showdown both drivers decided to return to home ground and race through the forests and villages of the United Kingdom.

With visibility reduced by tree coverage Mohammed cunningly trailed Graeme in order to stick close to his tyre marks. "He's cheetin'!" bellowed the red-faced Scot, but as soon as his Impreza bit into tarmac the extra engine power helped build a considerable lead. All was not lost for Mohammed and as the stage moved back into the forest, Graeme's heavier chassis proved difficult to control. The MG valiantly tried to catch up but Graeme, with the pride of Scotland roaring in his ears, limped across the finish line first, his job safe... until next time.

COME ON! HAVE IT!

We're waiting for a new breed of challenger, somebody who isn't shy of having their living room invaded by unhealthy lads whose job is to play videogames all day and therefore beat you at any game you care to name. Unless we send Paul that is, he'll probably lose – but only because he's old. And a bit senile. Anyway, invite CVG to your town for a challenge you'll never forget. Unless it's Paul.

HELLO, MY NAME IS: .....

BUT YOU MUST CALL ME..... [nickname]

AND I'M ..... [age]

I AM THE BEST AT: ..... [game name]

MY ADDRESS IS:.....

.....

DAYTIME TELEPHONE NO: .....

EVENING TELEPHONE NO: .....

EMAIL: .....

Send to: CVG Reader Challenge, CVG magazine, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1T 4JD

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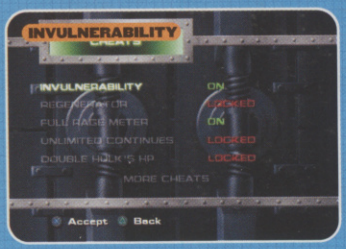
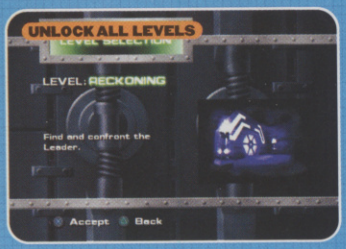
THE HULK

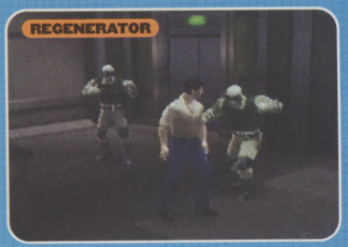
Input the following codes in the Codes Input Option to unlock them in the cheats menu. To activate them you must switch them on.



GMMSKIN

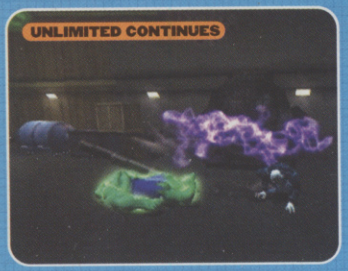


TRUBLVR

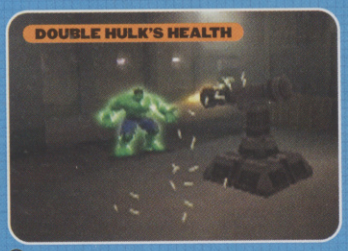


FLSHWND

ANGMNGT



GRNCHTR



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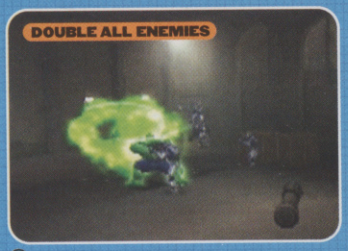


BRHGITH

MMMYHLP

FSTOFRY

BRCESTN

ENTER THE MATRIX

Choose Hacking from the main menu, select a save file then type in DIR and press Enter. Select DIR on the mini screen, choose it then choose Tools. Type in CHEAT.EXE to enable cheat mode then enter any of the following codes. Re-enter them to switch them off.

ENEMIES CANNOT HEAR YOU
4516DF45
ENEMIES CANNOT SEE YOU
FFFFFFF1
TURBO MODE
FF00001A
MULTIPLAYER FIGHTING
D5C55D1E
LOW GRAVITY
BB013FFF
FASTER LOGOS
7867F443
TAXI DRIVING
312MF451
SPARKS' CONSTRUCT IN TRAINING MODE
13D2C77F

DEF JAM VENDETTA

CHEAT MODE

Select battle mode and choose any type of match. Enter a user ID at the 'User Setups' menu. Hold L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 at the character screen and then enter one of the following codes

ARII
X, Square, Triangle, Circle, Square
BRIGGS (ALTERNATIVE OUTFIT)
X, Triangle, Circle, Square, Circle
BRIGGS (ALTERNATIVE OUTFIT)
X, Triangle, Square, X, Circle
CARLA
X, Square, X, X, X
CHUKKLEZ
Square, Square, Triangle, X, Circle
CRUZ
Circle, Triangle, X, X, Circle
D-MOB
Square, Triangle, Circle, X, Circle
D-MOB (ALTERNATIVE OUTFIT)
Square, Square, Triangle, Square, Square
DAN G
X, Circle, X, Circle, Square
DEEBO
Circle, Circle, X, X, Triangle
DEJA
Circle, Square, Circle, Circle, X
DMX
Circle, X, Circle, Triangle, Square
DRAKE
Triangle, Square, Circle, X, X
FUNKMASTER FLEX
Circle, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Square
HEADACHE
Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Square, Circle
HOUSE
Triangle, X, Triangle, Circle, X
ICEBERG
Square, Triangle, Circle, Square, Circle
LUDACRIS
Circle, Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle
MANNY (ALTERNATIVE OUTFIT)
Circle, Square, Circle, Square, Circle
MASA
X, Circle, Triangle, Square, Square
METHOD MAN
Square, Circle, X, Triangle, Circle
MOSES
Triangle, Triangle, Square, Square, X
N.O.R.E.
Circle, Square, Triangle, X, Circle
NYNE
Square, Circle, X, X, Triangle
OMAR
Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle, Triangle
OPAL
Circle, Circle, Square, Square, Triangle
PEEWEE
X, X, Square, Triangle, Square
PEEWEE (ALTERNATIVE OUTFIT)
X, Triangle, Triangle, Square, Circle
PENNY
X, X, X, Triangle, Circle
POCKETS
Triangle, Square, Circle, Square, X
PROOF (ALTERNATIVE OUTFIT)
X, Square, Triangle, Square, Circle
RAZOR
Triangle, Square, Triangle, Circle, X
RAZOR (ALTERNATIVE OUTFIT)
Square, Circle, X, Triangle, Triangle
REDMAN
Circle, Circle, Triangle, Square, X
RUFFNECK
X, Square, X, Triangle, Circle
RUFFNECK (ALTERNATIVE OUTFIT)
Square, Circle, Triangle, X, Square
SCARFACE
Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Square
SKETCH
Triangle, Triangle, Circle, Square, X
SNOWMAN
Triangle, Triangle, X, X, Circle

YOUR BEST TIPS

If you've got a star-quality tip that you want to share or if you'd like our resident expert Barny to answer a query, send it into us at:

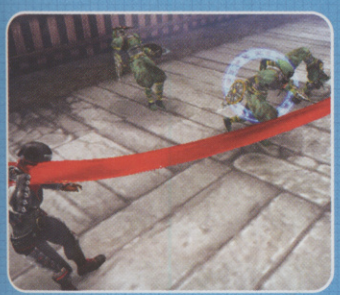
CVGTIPS@DENNIS.CO.UK

EXTENDED PLAY,
COMPUTER AND VIDEOGAMES,
DENNIS PUBLISHING,
30 CLEVELAND STREET,
LONDON W1T 4JD

SPIDER (ALTERNATIVE OUTFIT)
Square, Triangle, X, Square, Circle
STEEL
X, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Triangle
TANK (ALTERNATIVE OUTFIT)
X, Triangle, Triangle, Circle, Circle
T'AI
Circle, Circle, Square, X, Circle
ZAHEER
Triangle, Triangle, Square, X, X

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY
FIFTY LIVES
Highlight the Erase Option at the select screen. Hold down Select and then quickly bang in B, A, R, R, A, L. A sound confirms correct entry and you will start with 50 lives.

SHINOBI
Thanks to Joe Welsh from Scotland for sending us the following tips.
MORITSUNE
Get 30 Oboro Clan Coins
JOE MUSASHI
Get 40 Oboro Clan Coins
VR STAGE
Get 50 Oboro Clan Coins
HARD MODE
Finish the game on Normal
SUPER MODE
Finish the game on Hard



SOCOM: US NAVY SEALS
EXTRA WEAPONS
Beat the game on Ensign difficulty to unlock the Terrorist weapons. Complete the game on the Lieutenant difficulty to unlock the Multiple Grenade Launcher.
LEVEL SELECT
Finish the game on the Lieutenant JG difficulty.
DIFFICULTY LEVELS
Each time you beat the game a new higher difficulty setting will become unlocked.

RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN: TIDES OF WAR
Unlock the original Wolfenstein 3D (yep, it's an entire game. It might be old but it's a classic). To do this, beat the single-player campaign.

JURASSIC PARK 3: PARK BUILDER
Input the following codes as names for your park. Sent in by dino-mad Dan via email.
NO DNA
Zero-Park
MAX MONEY
Bonus-Park
TWENTY BUSES
Luckybus-20
MEN LOVE PARK
Men's-Park
EVERYONE LOVES PARK
Love-Park
NO TREES
Isla Sorna
MORE VEG
Isla Nublar

STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS
Enter the following codes at the code screen.
ALL MULTI-PLAYER LEVELS
LETSDANCE
UNLIMITED AMMUNITION
NOHONOR
BONUS MATERIALS
IGIVEUP
BONUS OBJECTIVES FOR CURRENT MISSION COMPLETE
ALITTLEHELP
TEAM PHOTOS
YOURMASTERS
ALL FMV SEQUENCES
GOTPOPCORN

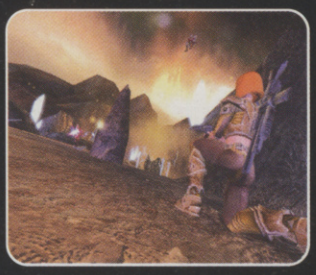
REALLY STUCK?
Absolutely stumped on a game? Ridiculed by your mates? There is hope:

THE COMPUTER AND VIDEO GAMES TIPS HELPLINE.
0906 466 4659

Open seven days a week, 8am-11pm. On the very rare occasion that they can't help, your query will be passed on to a support team, who guarantees to find you an answer within 24 hours. Calls cost £1.50 per minute at all times. Charges will appear on your standard telephone bill. If you do not pay the bill yourself, seek permission from whoever does before calling. In case of problems, please call Customer Services on 0870 800 6155.

BARNY'S PROBLEM CORNER

Is your brow furrowing into a deep crease? Allow Barny to sort out all your problems. But go easy on the girl questions



BRUTE FORCE
Q. I've played through nearly all of Brute Force and found it fairly easy except now I'm at the last level and I'm totally stuck. I've got to the last chapter where you fight the boss but I can't seem to damage him and I don't know where the shield generators are. Everywhere I go seems to be a dead end and it's very frustrating. Can you send me a walkthrough or some cheats so I can finish it?
Lee, via email

A. *Sorry, we don't send walkthroughs and we're not aware of any cheats at the moment. Here are some tips, though. At the start of the chapter hide everyone by the arch ahead then send Tex in Berserker mode up the slope on the right then left around the ledge. Enter the cave on the right and follow the track. This should take you to the shield generators, which you can destroy.*

Get Brutus to go the same way as Tex but bypass the cave and go down into a room with a switch. Press and go through the door to another switch. Now use Flint to snipe the boss until he moves then get Brutus to press the switch to kill him.

STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER
Q. I'm stuck at the beginning of Sebolto's Compound. I think I have to lower this massive bridge to get across the canyon but I dunno where the switch is.
Anon, via email

A. *The switch is on top of the tower on the other side of the canyon. It might look like an impossible jump but you can make it across the gap and slide down the drawbridge to the other side where you can then climb the tower and lower the bridge so Zam can come across.*

GRAND THEFT AUTO 3
Q. My friend told me that you can fly the Dodo plane. I found one at the airport and used it on the runways but I always end up ditching into the sea after about three seconds. My mate also says there is a secret city that you can only reach by flying. Please tell me how, as this will make my life worth living.
Anon, via email

A. *You can fly the Dodo but it's very tricky and takes a lot of practice. Put the Dodo at the end of the runway that the big planes use (don't worry about crashing into them as you'll pass right through them). Face Staunton, hold down R1 and accelerate to rev the engine. Release R1 and press and hold Down on the Dpad. As you zoom along the runway you will see sparks (use side view) and the plane will buck. When this happens let go of down. Do not press up.*

You need to keep the Dodo level by tapping down (takes practice) and you should be flying. Turning involves tapping left or right. The plane will go up and down but as long as it's level it should stay in the air. Once you get the hang of this you'll be flying smoothly in no time.

The secret city you mentioned is the leftover from the opening cutscene. You will find it by flying around Shoreside Vale. It's not solid and does not do anything but it's there if you want to look.

PRIMAL
Q. I've got to the Huntlands but I seem to get stuck every five minutes. I normally figure out what I have to do but this time I'm stumped. I need to do something with a statue in the graveyard area. I pointed the light at the door and now I need a gem to put in the door to open it but don't know where it is.
Anon

A. *Backtrack all the way to the campfire at the beginning of the section. Talk to the leader and he will hand over the gem to you.*

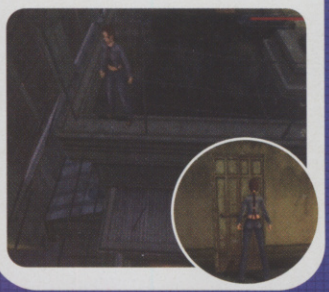
LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS PLAYER'S GUIDE

Alex Huhtala shows you how to find the upgrades Lara needs to progress, then helps you out with some of the trickier parts of the game

1 UPGRADE LOCATIONS

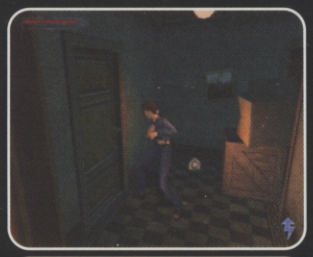
PARISIAN BACK STREETS

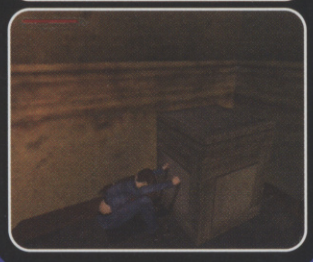
Collect Grip Level 2 by getting the crowbar – after Lara's first ledge-shimmy in the tutorial she reaches the rooftop and the crowbar is diagonally opposite from the section of roof Lara enters. You'll have to move the barrel and jump down. With the crowbar you can now break into the rooftop hut, granting Lara enough grip to reach the next section. If you miss the first Grip Level upgrade, find the crowbar in the street below and open the Iron Gate.



DERELICT APARTMENT BLOCK

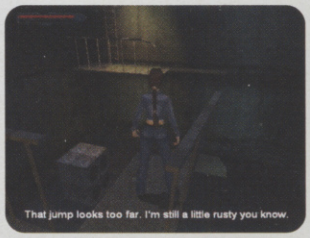
Upgrade Lara's Upper Body strength by opening the third floor apartment with a shoulder barge. This gives her strength to move the heavy block on the stairs above, allowing her to jump and grab onto the banister to get to the fourth floor.





INDUSTRIAL ROOFTOPS

At the third warehouse, Lara can go up the ladder or enter the warehouse to collect Lower Body 2 (Jump Level 2). She needs the upgrade to jump across and reach the far gantry. Climb down the ladder, go outside and push the heavy object next to the broken ladder to receive the upgrade.



PARISIAN GHETTO

Reached from the subway train. If Lara has Jump Level 2, she can get to the secret behind the mesh fence. To do this, jump to the other gantry over the pipe and use the small ledge and the moss to shimmy across.

ST. AICARD'S CHURCH

If you missed Lower Body 2, push the stone chest inside the church by the statue to the left. This will give you the upgrade. But wait! There are some cool secrets above. Using the stone, climb onto it and grab the ledge above. Haul Lara up and use the dirty wall to climb into the rafters. At the far end behind the organ is another antique ring.

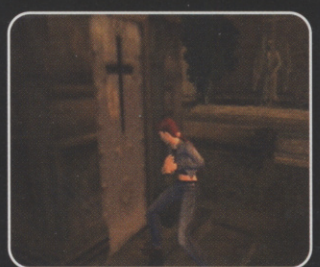
SERPENT ROUGE

In the garage pull the lever on the machine on the right to gain Upper Body 4. This opens the grate beneath the car, allowing you access to the nightclub, and enables you to shoulder barge the office door in the garage.

Inside the nightclub, if Lara didn't get the Lower Body 2 upgrade earlier she can get it here on the first floor balcony by moving the crate towards the lower light rig. At the top of the nightclub, above the main light rigging, Lara can get the Lower Body 3 (Kick Door/Wall) upgrade by kicking the raised bridge down. This gives her the strength to break into the control room.

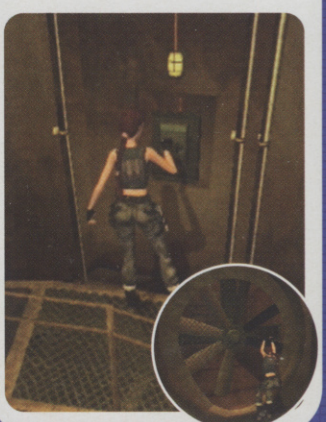
ST. AICARD'S GRAVEYARD

There's another chance to gain the Upper Body 4 upgrade if you missed it earlier. In the same locked area as the angel statue, Lara can barge open the iron mausoleum door with the cross on the front. With this increase in strength she can now barge open the other iron cross door in the small locked area in the corner of the graveyard to get some secret items. Above this mausoleum there's also a ledge you may want to investigate.



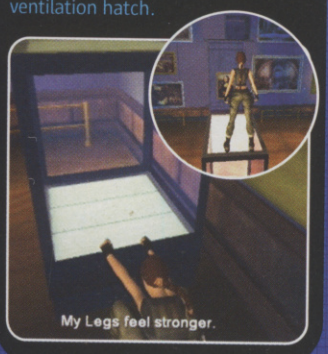
LOUVRE STORM DRAINS

From the main hub, climb the drainpipe and throw the switch. This stops the broken fan. Now go to the broken fan and turn it, giving Lara the Upper Body 5 upgrade. Now you have the strength to turn the other valves and stop the flow of water.



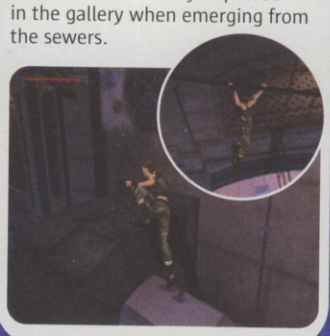
LOUVRE GALLERIES

In the room with the Mona Lisa painting, pull the glass case in the corner for the Lower Body 4 upgrade. Lara can now push the large display case in the same room. Push it towards the Mona Lisa and once the laser switch is activated, climb on top of the large case and jump up towards the ventilation hatch.



LOUVRE ROOFTOP

Climb up onto the ledge using the ventilation tubes near the air-conditioning unit attached to the wall. Go along this ledge until you reach the wire. Grab onto the wire and shimmy along. At the end of this Lara will feel stronger and gain the Upper Body 6 upgrade. This will also enable her to barge open the first locked door you passed in the gallery when emerging from the sewers.

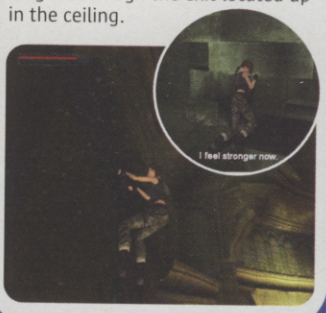


TOMB OF ANCIENTS

At the very bottom of the tomb Lara gains the Lower Body 5 upgrade by kicking open the iron door, giving her the strength to open the other door in this tunnel.

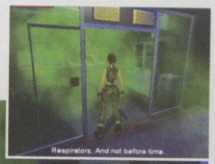
HALL OF SEASONS

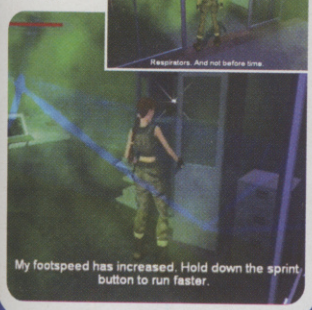
After the top of the stairs in the main hall there's a climbable wall; next to this is a small switch. Throw the switch and the door at the top of the stairs opens. Go through the door and push the wall on the right. This gives Lara the Upper Body 7 upgrade, increasing her grip, and enabling her to go back to the climbable wall and to further heights through the exit located up in the ceiling.



GALLERIES UNDER SIEGE

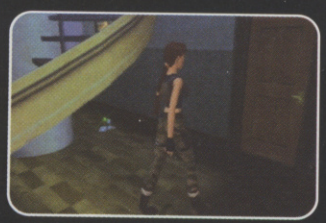
Lower Body 6 is now available by going through the gallery, upstairs into the offices and through the first door on the right. Inside in a cabinet are gas masks. Once Lara picks one up she receives the sprint upgrade, enabling her to run fast for short periods of time. Useful.

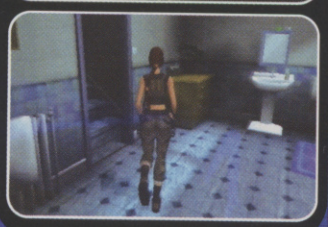




VON CROY'S APARTMENT

Gain access to Von Croy's bathroom and you receive the Lower Body 7 upgrade, allowing you access to some of the closed-off areas of the apartment building.



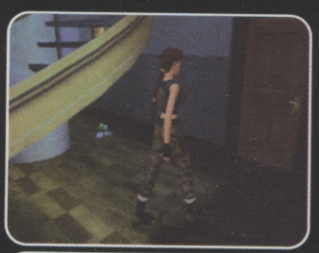


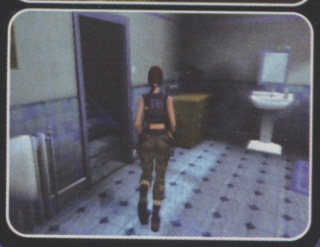
MONSTRUM CRIME SCENE

Inside Vasiley's push the chest of drawers towards the scaffolding to attain the Upper Body 8 upgrade. The chest enables Lara to climb the scaffolding and the upgrade allows her to pull the chain next to the stained-glass window.

STRAHOV FORTRESS

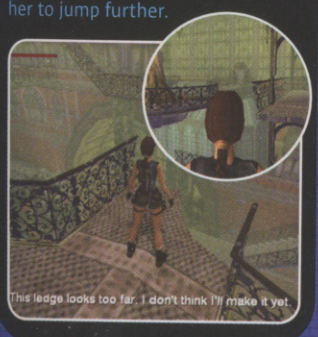
Lara gains the Lower Body 8 upgrade by completing the Strahov Box Puzzle (details on page 75).





BIO-RESEARCH FACILITY

Get the Lower Body 9 upgrade in the large greenhouse in the Bio-Research Facility. There's a broken gantry that Lara says she isn't strong enough to cross yet. Go to the other broken gantry on the left wall and take a running jump and grab. This increases Lara's strength, giving her the upgrade that allows her to jump further.

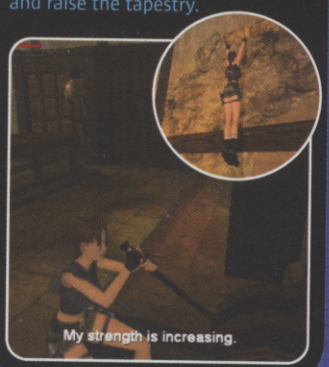


AQUATIC RESEARCH AREA

In the Aquatic Research Area you can get the Upper Body 9 upgrade by moving the large iron bucket beneath the large dispenser that's dripping blood. This gives Lara the grip to reach the lift control room.

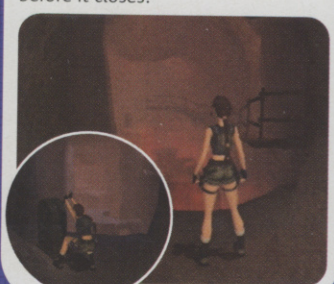
VAULT OF TROPHIES

Inside the main Vault of Trophies, Lara obtains the Lower Body 10 upgrade by pulling the large lever to the right of the grand fireplace. This gives Lara the upgrade, opens a secret compartment and gives her the strength to pull the chain and raise the tapestry.



THE LOST DOMAIN

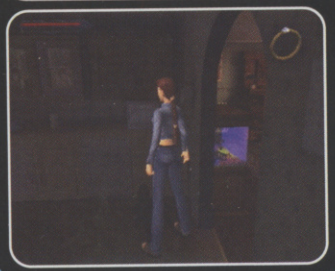
The Lost Domain holds the final upgrade. From the start position take the right-hand tunnel and make the series of jumps to the platform on the far end. This gives Lara the Lower Body 10 upgrade, enabling her to jump while sprinting. Throw the switch so you can take an easier route back. This new skill allows Lara to get to the door in the next tunnel before it closes.

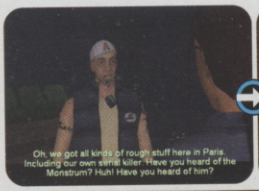


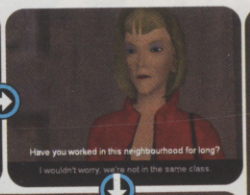
2 TIPS FOR THE TOUGH BITS

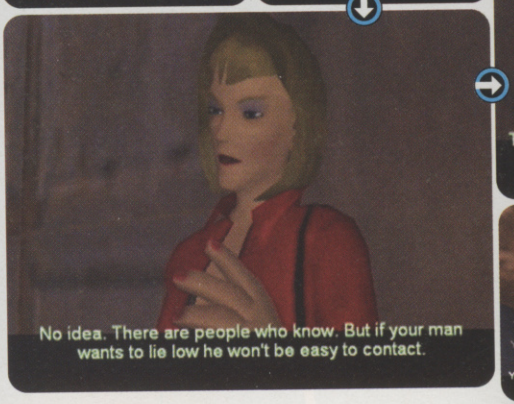
MARGOT CARVIER'S APARTMENT

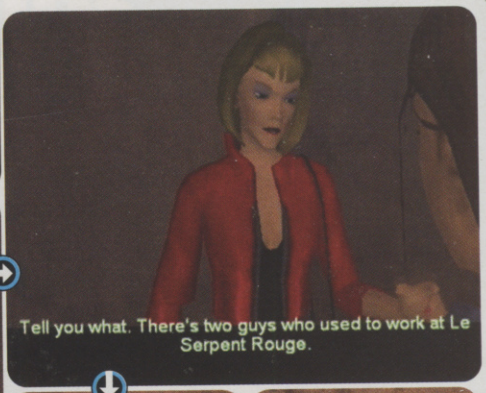
If Carvier doesn't give you Von Croy's Diary, don't worry – Lara still has sufficient time to search the apartment and find it. But you will have to hurry, as Carvier calls the police, leaving Lara with little time to explore. The diary is located on the right-hand side of the kitchen, just behind the entrance. Another neat object for you to collect is the antique ring on the small table next to the kitchen.

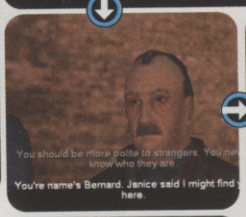


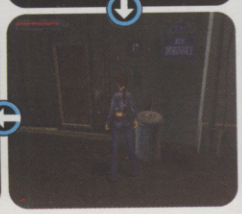












PARISIAN GHETTO

Speak to the dodgy guy above the old subway train and Janice who is hanging around outside the Serpent Rouge nightclub. Ask Janice, "Have you worked in this place for long?" followed by, "Oh, trouble?"

The next choice determines which former employee of the Serpent Rouge you help, Bernard or Pierre. For Bernard ask, "Better than anything so far. I didn't catch your name." For Pierre ask about the Café owner's luck.

Say to Bernard: "Your name's Bernard, Janice said I might find you here", then, "I'm trying to find someone", followed by, "Here. Now, how do I find Bouchard?" Bernard will now give you the key to the garage of the Serpent Rouge.

Once you retrieve the box in the Serpent Rouge, take it to Pierre and he will give you the code number to enter Francine's apartment at 17 Rue Dominique. If you return it to Bernard he will give you the password to get past Bouchard's bodyguard who is guarding the gate next to St. Aicard's church.

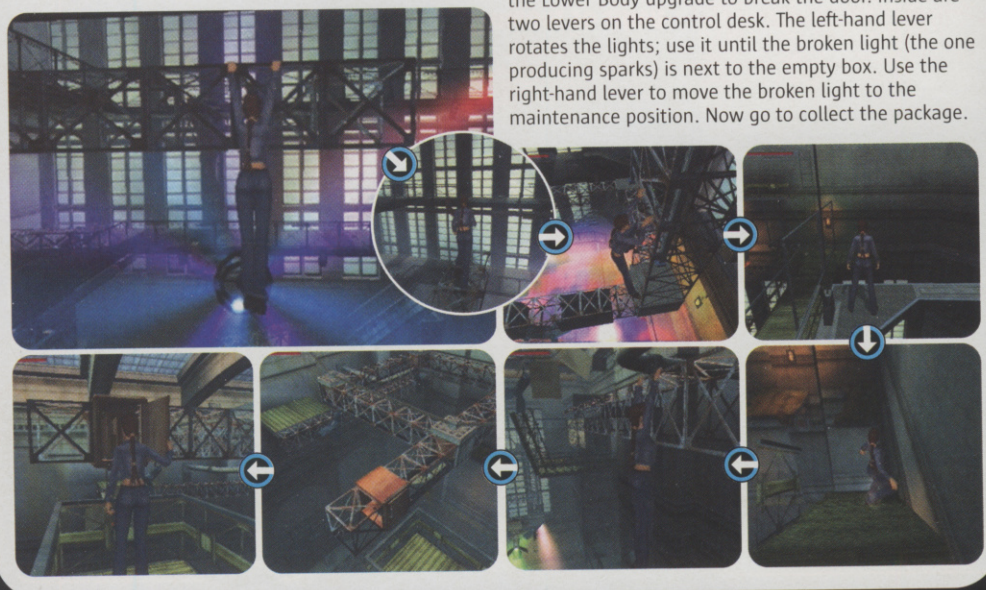
SERPENT ROUGE

The idea here is to retrieve the package for either Bernard or Pierre. The package is in the light rigging, high inside the nightclub. First turn on the music and lights by throwing the switch in the DJ booth. Take the first flight of stairs. Then push the crate towards the lower light rig, climb onto it and run across and jump onto the next balcony.

Next to the pick-up items is a section of balcony without a railing. Here you must jump onto the big lighting rig that keeps going up and down. When the rig is at its lowest, jump and hold on. Now jump to the other side of the rig and climb onto the top. Jump back across and wait until the rig is in its highest position. Now jump onto the walkway.

Go up the ladder. You need to get to the control room on the other side. However, because the bridge is raised you'll need to go around the outside of the room, using the platforms and grabbing onto the rigging in the far corner. Shimmy along the rigging; hoist yourself up onto the platform on the end of the rigging and from here jump to the walkway next to the control room.

Kick the raised bridge to lower it and to give Lara the Lower Body upgrade to break the door. Inside are two levers on the control desk. The left-hand lever rotates the lights; use it until the broken light (the one producing sparks) is next to the empty box. Use the right-hand lever to move the broken light to the maintenance position. Now go to collect the package.



ST. AICARD'S GRAVEYARD

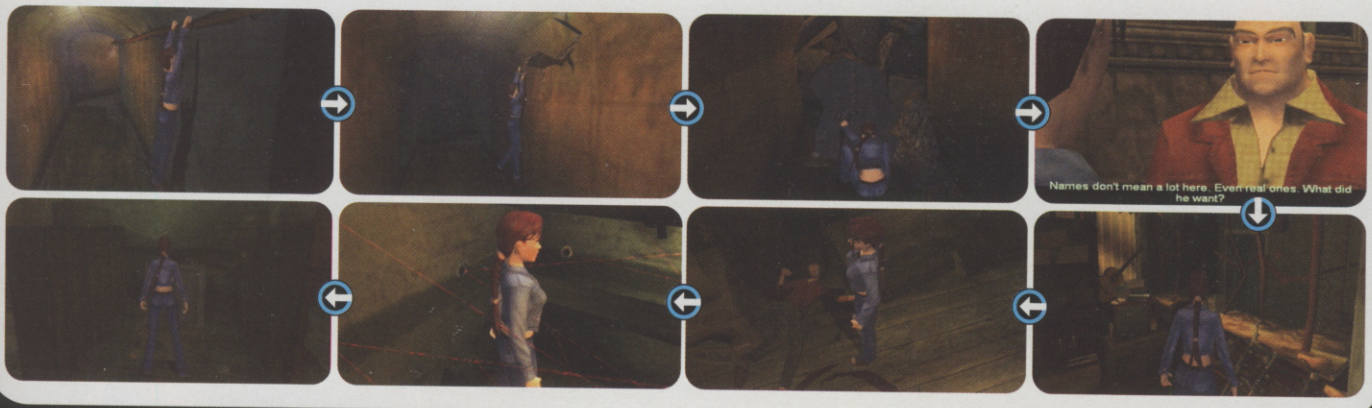
Use the small tombs to jump and grab onto the larger mausoleums. From the top of the larger mausoleums Lara can gain access to the locked areas, simply by jumping down when she is near them. Gain access to Bouchard's hideout by investigating the angel statue. Push it from behind and drop down.

BOUCHARD'S HIDEOUT

After the floor collapses cross the next section by grabbing the red pipe above the pit to the right. Shimmy along the entire length and drop down. Use the same technique to cross the slimy pool.The crack in the wall doesn't quite clear it, so drop into the gunk, and quickly swim underneath the stone slab and into the next pool.

At the far end use the mossy wall to climb out, position Lara above the ledge on the right until she's dangling and shimmy along to the end.At the blocked tunnel pull out the slab to remove the debris. Now kick open the small metal gate and crawl inside. Be careful what you say to Bouchard as the wrong response will result in instant death for Lara. Don't say, "Don't jerk me around." Do say, "What would you suggest?" After the meeting with Bouchard the next step is to revisit Renne's Pawnshop. Hopefully you've already sold him any valuable antiques you may have found because once you've visited Bouchard you won't get another chance. Why? Because Renne's been murdered! Before you get to the Pawnshop make sure you save because the next part is tricky. This bit's a bit callous but for your own good: you need to search Renne's body and collect his wallet. In the Item inventory inspect the wallet and you'll find a scrap of paper inside with the code number 14529. Use this to open the vault and collect the supplies.

Left of the vault is a hatch in the floor, your escape route. Collect the last item and trigger the bomb, bolt for the hatch, open it, drop down and run!



LOUVRE STORM DRAINS

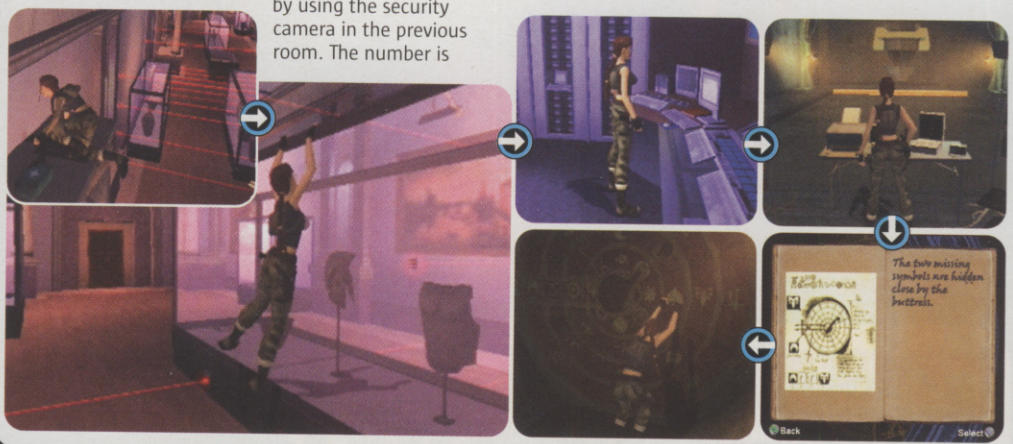
You need to turn six valves to stop the flow of water. The first four are all close to or just off the main hub. The last two are situated elsewhere. There's a cutscene once you've turned the correct valve that opens a new tunnel beneath the main pool of water. Drop into it and swim into another chamber. The fifth valve is easy to turn. For the sixth, use the broken walkway as a ladder, climb up and turn the final valve.

LOUVRE

First gallery with laser beams: the route through is to climb onto the first display case, jump left and grab onto the wall-mounted slab. From here take a running jump to the first glass cabinet on the left wall. At this point either jump onto the case past the lasers guarding the floor from the middle case, or jump onto the right-hand case, grab onto the ledge above and shimmy past the beams. On the glass case, wait for the beams to switch off and jump to the higher display case. Now drop to the right-hand side and shimmy along the case. Finally, climb the case on the right-hand wall and jump through the gap in the beams.

Gain the access code to Carvier's office in the Louvre by using the security camera in the previous room. The number is attached to Carvier's computer, 14639. Inside you'll collect the security pass that allows you to access the Archaeological Dig. At the dig, power the x-ray machine in the right office. In the second office collect the symbol by the printer. Use the x-ray machine; the symbol is hidden near the top left corner.

Check Lara's notebook. This will tell you that the first symbol on the big dial puzzle needs to be a crescent moon. The fourth symbol is a scorpion. The second from the left-hand symbol is the one you found in the x-ray machine. The third symbol is the one from the printer in the office. Use the levers to the right of the dial to lock into position each of the symbols once they are in the correct position on the dial.

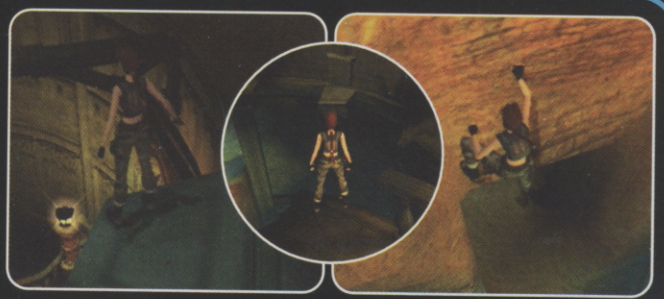


TOMB OF ANCIENTS

After the cutscene of the huge tomb below, drop over the side of the entrance and climb downwards using the rock face. Don't drop – it's too far. From the ledge jump and grab onto the exposed beam, then jump into the cavern entrance. There's a tunnel and hole inside which will get you to the elaborate walkway.

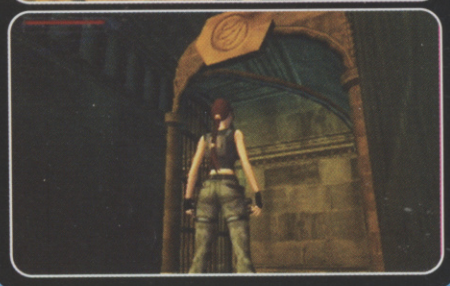
Jump to the cracked section of walkway. From the corner run and jump onto the platform where there isn't a gargoyle.

If you were facing the wall you need to jump to the gargoyle to the left, grab the platform and shimmy until you can drop to the outcrop below. Lower yourself over the edge of the middle section and rock climb below to the small recess. Climb towards the left until you can drop to a lower rocky platform. Jump to the exposed beam and throw the switch.



HALL OF SEASONS

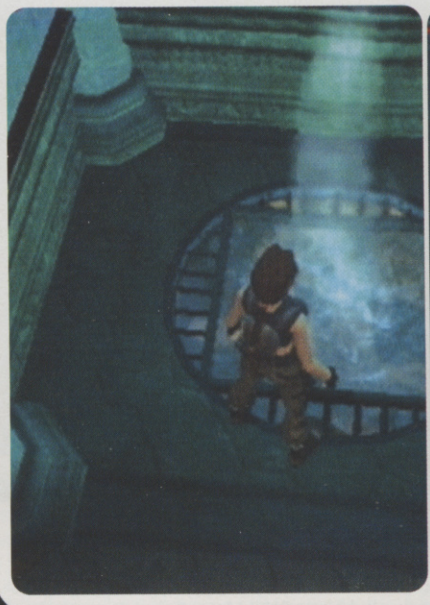
To avoid the booby traps on the entrance to the separate challenges, simply match the symbol you're standing on (to open the doors) to the safe entrance. Don't use the symbol marking the first set of doors, but the matching symbol in the second tier, closer to the entrance of the challenge. In The Breath of Hades, on the right after you enter, push the wall and throw the switch inside to open the gate across the chasm. You wouldn't want to cross this room three times!

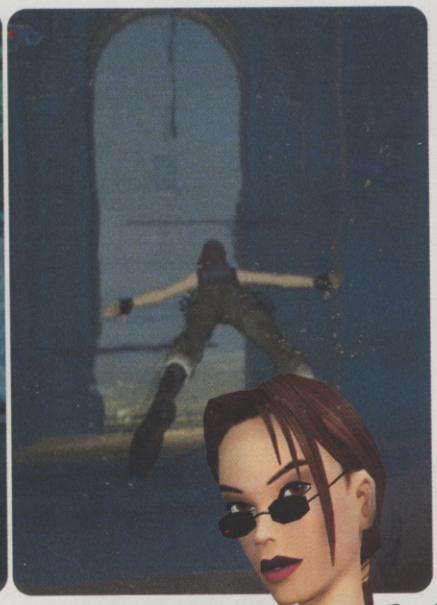


NEPTUNE'S HALL

Go to the far room and jump into the small pool. In the room guarded by spikes, throw the switch. Swim back to the entrance of the small pool and dive into the main pool in the other room. There's a small tunnel at the bottom to the right of the main door. Inside throw the switch that raises the water level so that you can access the tunnels through the doorways.

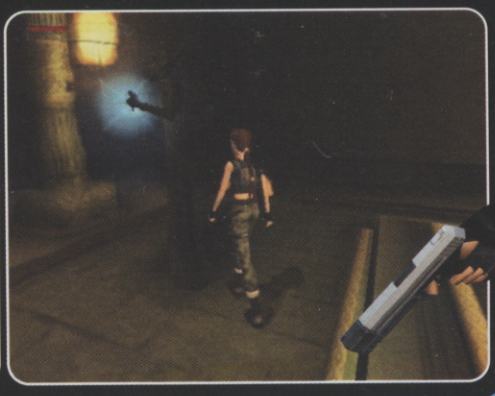
In the tunnel to the left of the main door, drop into the small hatch and the water below. Keep swimming until you find another lower tunnel, carry on swimming and collect the Water Crystal, then throw the switch on the pedestal that the crystal was resting on. This allows you to exit through the small pool.





OBSCURA TOMB

You can only grab the painting when the spirit isn't looking at Lara. When his back is turned walk to the illuminated statue and grab hold of the picture.



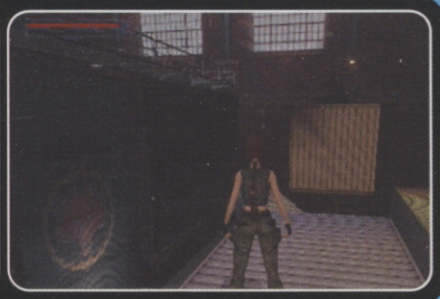
THE MONSTRUM CRIME SCENE

Enter Vasiley's through the sewers (again). It's difficult to see in the snowstorm but go down the side alley to the left of the main building surrounded by police tape. At the back left there's a grate, but you need to open it twice! The first time Lara removes a bolt, the second she opens the grate. Trouble is – it's difficult to see that she removes the bolt in the snow.

Inside Vasiley's the chains next to the stained glass window are the key to two puzzles. First pull the chain on the left twice to reveal a secret compartment. Then pull the chain on the right until the sunlight hits the large circle on the floor. This opens the clock face. At the clock, set the dial to three to open the hidden room. Read the fax on the floor in Vasiley's office to gain his security code.

STRAHOV FORTRESS

You have to be quick when you enter here or you'll reach a dead end. When Lara walks near the large doors a cutscene shows a magnetic crane starting up. Quickly get on top of the first container to the left of the doors. Wait for the crane to collect the top container, on the stack of three, next to this position. Once it's picked up, run and grab onto the top of the second container. Again wait for the crane to rest in the middle where it slightly lowers the container it just collected, with just enough time for you to run and grab onto it. This gives you a nice ride to the next section.

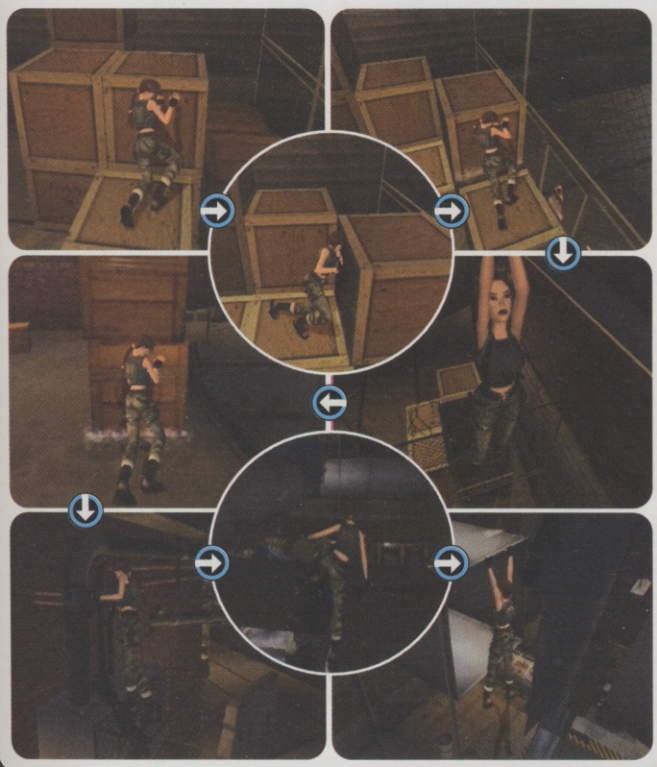


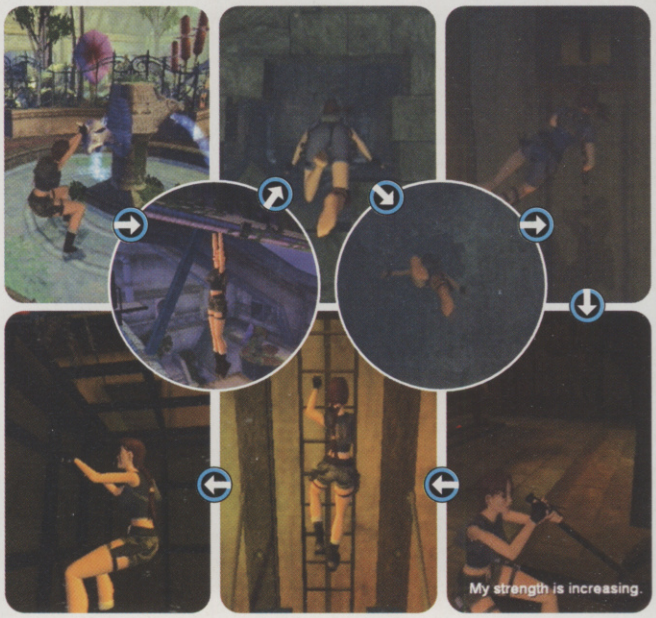
STRAHOV BLOCK PUZZLE

The push box puzzle near the security fence is really simple. Get Lara the height to reach the overhead pipe so she can clear the barbed wire fence. There are two stacks of two boxes and one stack of three. First move two of the stray boxes right next to the fence so you can move the boxes of height two. Move all of the height two boxes towards the fence, creating a bridge to move the height three box in a straight line as close to the fence as possible.

When Lara has pushed the top box towards the fence her strength increases. Notice the steam coming out of the pipe above? Now you need to shut that off. Follow the pipe around and you'll notice the valve. There's a stack of two boxes nearby. Lara's strength upgrade now allows her to push two boxes at once; push them towards the valve and shut it off, allowing Lara to finally get over that gate!

Once over the gate, climb the ladder and start the saw machine. It'll go crazy and cut into the ventilation system. From the saw control, you can climb up to the ventilation shafts. You need to get inside the first ventilation shaft. Do so by climbing on top, then dropping down and grabbing so that you're clinging onto the bottom of the shaft, not the top. Then haul yourself up and crawl along.





BIO-RESEARCH FACILITY

After being gassed, pull one of the gargoyles on the fountain to open a secret room. The switch inside will allow Lara to leave this first greenhouse. In the next large room, once you've shot the creatures, look up to see a moss-covered pipe that goes from the second floor areas all the way to the gantry above. Climb up and turn the valves to create an exit.

The puzzle to remove the tentacle plant that's blocking the door is achieved by going to the valve area and moving the table. Just follow the instructions on the wall – the crossed-out ones will remove the plant. From the left turn the first, second and fourth valves, then pull the lever.

Lara gains access to the Vault of Trophies by swimming through some debris-ridden tunnels. Look out for sections of bricked wall; Lara can kick these to remove the bricks. When you reach the submerged vault you'll also find an air pocket behind another bricked section.

The submerged vault puzzle is pretty simple. Remember what we've learned: this is a Lux Veritatis vault. The clue in the room is "The brothers reunited see the gates thrown open". Above that are the letters L and V just in case you forgot where you were. Simply pull the chains behind the Limoux and Vasiley statues and you're free to go.

In Eckhardt's lab, collect the vial on the table in the far corner and throw the switch by the grill. This opens the hatch to the upper level. Collect the vial inside the grill by dropping down. Then collect the vial from inside the cage by jumping onto it and going inside. Use the climbable wall inside the pit to get out. Place the vials in the two receptacles and on the wall in the other room. This cools the water, allowing you to get the last shard.

ECKHARDT BATTLE

Avoid Eckhardt's attacks by jumping the fire balls and side-stepping the purple electricity attack. You can't shoot him as he's protected by a force field and you can't escape from the containment area for the same reason. Wait for him to create his three clones. After he does this he runs into the middle, on fire. Wait for the burning to stop then walk up to him and hit, don't shoot. Lara will use the shards. Keep doing this until he'd defeated.

LOG ON AND LOAD UP

Still hungry for more even after thumbing through this game-packed issue of CVG? Logging onto **ComputerAndVideogames.com** will satisfy the biggest gaming appetites

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ON INFO!

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REVIEWS

FULLY INDEPENDENT & MULTI-FORMAT ● TRUST NO ONE ELSE

CVG EXPERT REVIEWERS

Our merry band of videogaming oracles just keeps getting bigger and better. Meet 'em here

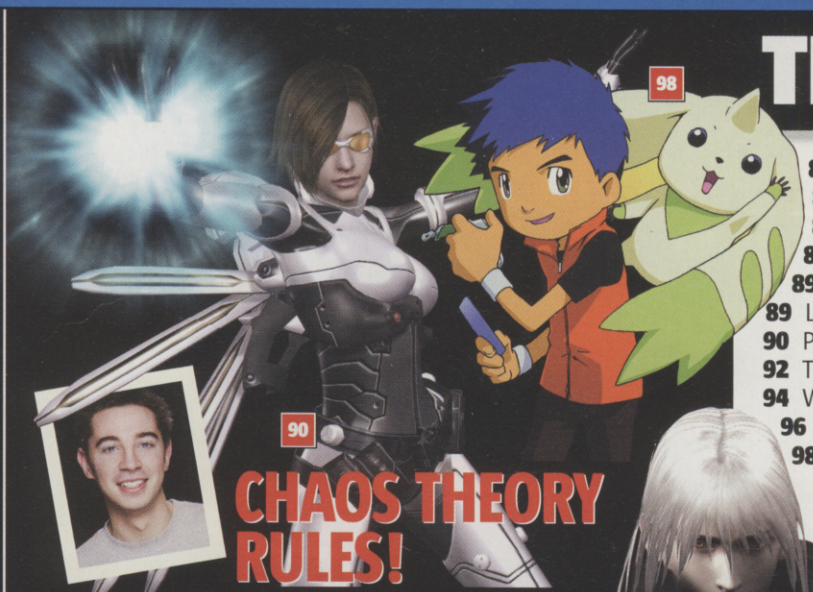
Alex Huhtala
ACTION-ADVENTURE HERO
Alex somehow managed to juggle reviewing Chaos Legion, guiding Lara's latest and getting up close and personal with Test at a SmackDown! event without losing his cool edge. Duuude!

Graeme
KING OF STRATEGY
CVG's newest member showed his superior skills at both reviewing *and* showing up rude bois in this month's reader challenge so he forgoes the usual initiation of tarring and feathering.

Matt Wales
SHOOTING/DANCING GURU
Forced to stare at P.N.03's Vanessa's shiny bubble butt for hours at a time, Matt has developed a fixation with all things posterior and can now be found in the gym honing his derriere.

Stephen Daultrey
ACTION AND ESCAPE ARTIST
For ultimate authority, CVG freelancer Stephen watched The Great Escape movie over and over, pausing only to peer at Mars through his telescope for any sign of alien revolt. That's dedication.

Paul Davies
CHIEF MONSTER TRAINER
We weren't sure how the Pokémaniac was going to react when we handed him a Digimon game. Happily he was able to accept the rival monsters into his heart without unleashing 'Bad Paul' unto the world.



THIS MONTH

80 Chaos Legion PS2
84 Indiana Jones And The Emperor's Tomb .. PS2
86 Formula One 2003 ..... PS2
88 Smash Cars PS2
89 Next Generation Tennis 2003 ..... PS2
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92 The Great Escape ..... XBOX, PS2, PC
94 Wario World ..... GC
96 RTX Red Rock PS2
98 Digimon Battle Spirit ..... GBA

CHAOS THEORY RULES!

In what is probably the most rasping, sandpaper-dry month for games releases so far this year, Capcom glides along like a slick of massage oil to lubricate your gaming engines.

With both Chaos Legion and the first of the company's much-lauded GameCube exclusives, P.N.03, you're guaranteed sexy heroes, beautiful visuals and plenty of originality. But what's most interesting about these two games is that they ditch plot development in favour of chunks of insanely intense action, with more importance placed on scores than story. In both cases it works beautifully. Now give us some kind of online score ranking so we can gloat at our totals and we'd be even happier.

LEE
Lee Skittrell
Games Editor

WHAT THE SCORES MEAN

CVG only reviews the biggest, best or most significant releases of the month. And our scores are based on one key measure: fun! It's that simple. Here's a breakdown:

1	WHY, GOD, WHY?	6	FAIRLY SOLID BUT NOWT SPECIAL
2	STINKS. NEVER PLAY THIS	7	TASTY
3	A WASTE OF YOUR MONEY	8	QUALITY GAME. CONSIDER BUYING IT
4	MAYBE RENT, NEVER BUY	9	CLASS ON A DISC
5	VERY AVERAGE	10	AN ABSOLUTE MUST THAT DEFINES THE GENRE

CVG AWARDS SYSTEM

These accolades don't get dished out just because a game gets a certain score. They're CVG's way of telling you which are our pet hates and personal favourites.

CVG ESSENTIAL
The most coveted award a game can get. It's worth buying the console to play the game

CVG RECOMMENDED
A damn good game. It may not break the mould, but it's a cut above the rest

CVG GAME OF THE MONTH
Doesn't have to be the highest scorer, but it's CVG's pick of the bunch this month

CVG STINKER
More abominable than a Yeti

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CHAOS LEGION

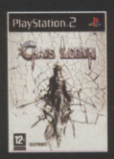
YOU, A GIANT SWORD AND THOUSANDS OF ENEMIES. WHAT COULD BE SIMPLER?

Everything on screen needs to be chopped down before you can progress

GAME INFO

ONLINE GAMING

PUB: CAPCOM ● DEV: CAPCOM ● WWW.CAPCOM.COM



A big sword and lots of enemies to hack down: it doesn't sound like much of a game but, oh boy, it is. Chaos Legion is a return to traditional values. It may have fancy graphics and a bonkers plot but at its heart is a very simple game and as we soon found out, there's nothing wrong with that!

Capcom has described Chaos Legion as a 'gothic opera' and after sitting through the intro movie you can easily understand why. The environments and style, with vast castles and long flowing robes, are certainly gothic, while the incomprehensible plot and a hero named Sieg Warheit could definitely be described as operatic – it's positively Wagnerian by design.

Add hair crazier than Devil May Cry's Dante's and you have all the ingredients for a true gothic opera. Well, it certainly makes a change from survival horror.

Talking of Devil May Cry, Chaos Legion has clearly been inspired by the success of that series. The design is strikingly similar, but whereas DMC merged action with the best bits of Resident Evil and Castlevania, Chaos Legion has a groove of its own.

Sieg looks like he's got his arm caught in a drainpipe

There's no backtracking for items here, it's just clear a room of enemies and move on. Easy.

SUMMON GET IT!

The twist to the gameplay comes in the shape of 'legions'. These are powerful allies that can be summoned to join the battle whenever things get a little too much for a lone swordsman. With the vast number of enemies on screen you'll definitely want help and quick.

How many enemies on screen? Enough, no, more than enough for one man and his sword

As a general rule of thumb, the bigger they are the harder they fall. Ha!

THE MORE THE MERRIER

The legions of the title are a vital component to completing the game.

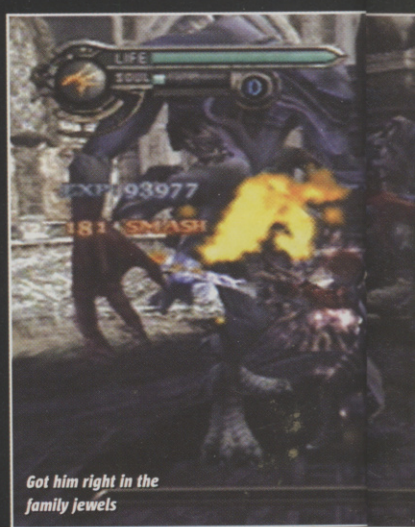
You collect a new legion as you complete each level. As each team offers unique skills and you can only enter a new level with two legions on call, you need to be tactical about whom you decide to take into battle.

Ultimately you want to collect Thanatos, the most powerful legion. He's a bloomin' great monster that makes mincemeat of whatever lies in your path. Trouble is, the crest you need to collect him is broken into nine parts; at least he'll be handy on the final level, though.

Thanatos gets to strut his powerful stuff. Very impressive

Thanatos is the strongest legion at your command – looks cool too

Wow, look at the pretty colours. Gothic good looks are just one of the game's attributes



Got him right in the family jewels

At the end of each of Chaos Legion's levels you get graded, just like in the old days

Sieg attracts the attention of a couple of birds

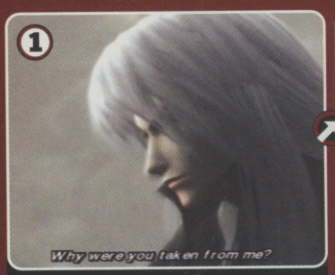
Here's another one about to bite the dust, hopefully in a spectacular way

YOU'RE 'AVIN' A LARF!

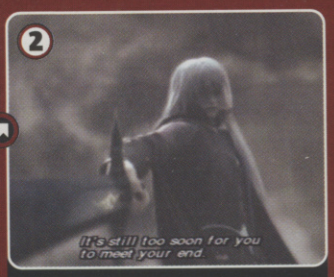
Did we mention that Chaos Legion had a rather incomprehensible plot? Well, see if you can make any sense of this little lot...

"Two allies torn apart by tragedy... yet bound by fate. The three sacred glyphs, the mythic and forbidden symbols of an ancient world torn apart. Only these mystic relics have the power to open the Gateway of Chaos and lead the people to the Red Moon. Legend says that when the three glyphs meet, the three worlds will once again be reunited. Two men, once friends, now have their fates tied together by the tragic death of a young maiden. One, a brave young knight and summoner of the Chaos Legion. The other, a noble lord who has fallen to the dark side. Both hold the key to the sacred glyphs in their power. The legions shall be summoned in this dark gothic opera!"

Who did they get to write this – Nostradamus? At least the cutscenes look pretty.

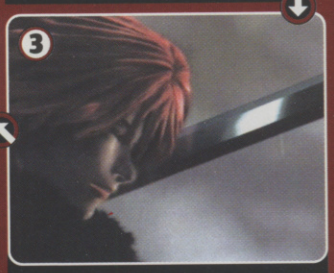


Aha! He's wearing lipstick and eye make-up so he must be evil!



He's angry because everyone's been mocking the haircut his mum gave him

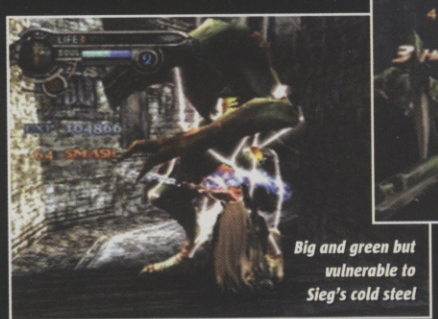
Check out the beautifully drawn gothic architecture, turrets 'n' all



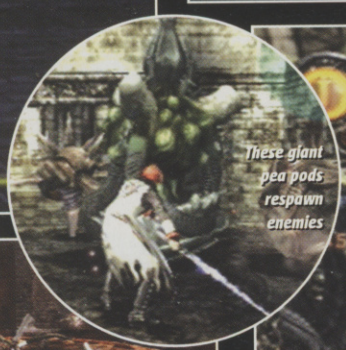
Our hero Sieg: hold a sword against his face and he doesn't even flinch

Amid this mass of colourful goings-on, things are beginning to get rather messy

Another boss that's a little camera shy



Big and green but vulnerable to Sieg's cold steel

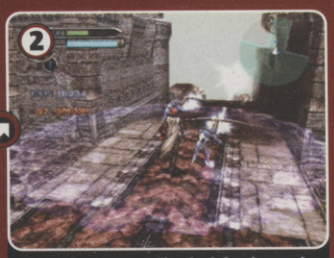


Sieg gets some protection from a legion of archers, use their teamwork to rack up huge combos

PERFECT POWER-UPS

Each legion can be enhanced in five areas. Force is the number of soldiers within that legion. Assist is a unique move that the legion can be called to perform at any time. That move may consist of a quick burst and sword attack performed by the Guilt legion, or self-exploding like a smart bomb by the Blasphemy boys. Enchant is a power-up that aids Sieg by increasing his powers in the field, while Attack and Defence can both be increased by eight levels, upping the strength and effectiveness of your chosen legion.

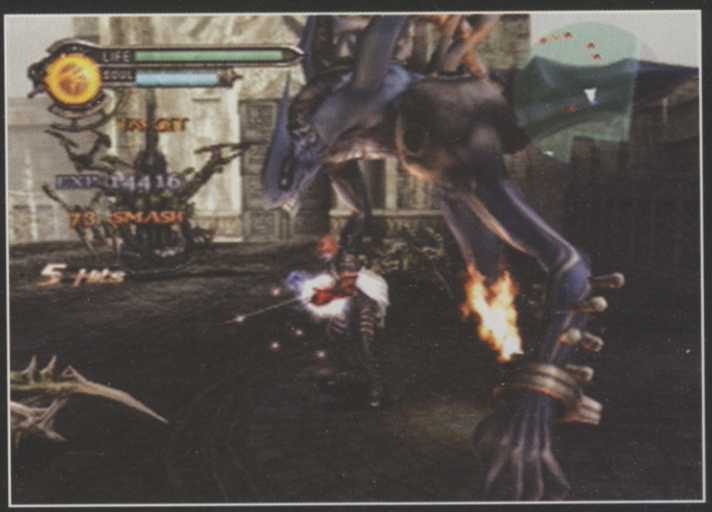
Here the hero of the piece, the gothically named Sieg, is using the legion as a suitably effective shield



The archers protect Sieg in defensive mode. We could do with a few of them when leaving CVG towers in the dead of night

When they glow red they're in attack mode

The action is frantic: the best word to describe this little mêlée is BUNDLE!



Thanatos is the most powerful legion so he's a good one to have around

These mutants will blow themselves up so keep an eye out for them if you prefer your body parts to stay intact

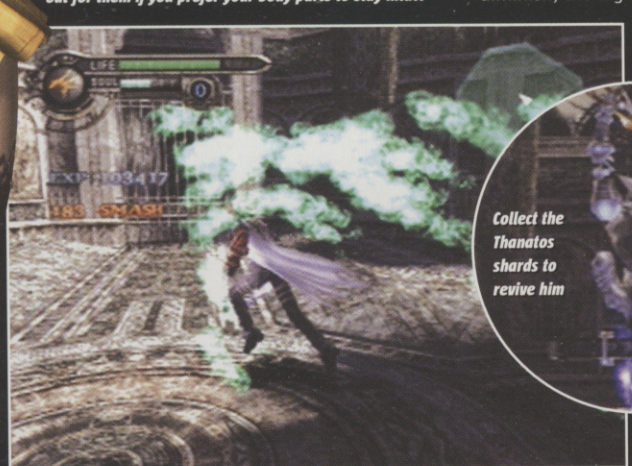
Your legions can be ordered to be aggressive or defensive: you can control them yourself to remove enemies or let their smart AI go and battle on their own accord. The cool thing is that these legions are far more than just a gimmick. They add a tactical component to the action, some being more effective than others at removing certain types of enemies.

Your legions are powered by the soul of Sieg, who does so by simply cutting down enemies. As they vanish their soul force is added to his. If Sieg is passive, letting the legions do all the work, the soul force will soon diminish, the legions unable to be summoned. The idea is to work cooperatively, using the legions to assist Sieg and vice versa.

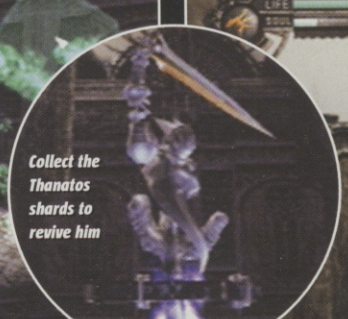
Add a role-player element into the mix, in which Sieg and his legions' attributes increase as you progress through the levels, and you will soon be summoning or going it alone like it's second nature.

LEGION REGION

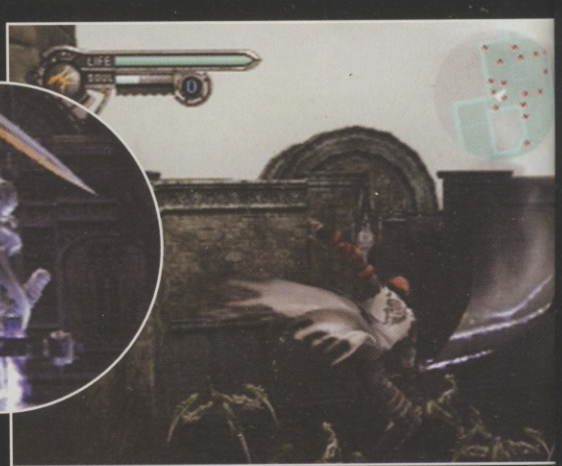
The role-playing element makes you want to progress further as the rewards are very cool. As you complete each level new legions are unlocked. The catch is that you can only have two on call for each section. Do you



If you can remove enemies, you will receive a boost to your life force



Collect the Thanatos shards to revive him



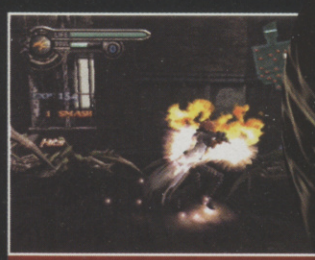
Sieg swoops into action – death from above, you green vermin

If it's green and got boils it must be bad

This is where it feels like Space Invaders

Come and have a go if you think you're hard enough

< Use experience points to upgrade each legion, granting new abilities


Sieg treats his enemies to a taste of his broad sword. How generous

Hmm, you find a real motley crew down the local supermarket these days

BOSSY BOOTS

With lots of hack 'n' slash action and plenty of shifty creatures to battle on your quest, you just know the designers will save something special for the end-of-level guardians.

The bosses in Chaos Legion have their good qualities, but we have to admit, we've seen better elsewhere. Still, you can't win them all.

Sieg runs for cover from the attack of an almighty pair of legs

It's not the size of the sword that's important, it's how you use it!

He's kind of funny-looking. Still, they say beauty's in the eye of the beholder

Of course, every good boss worth his salt has his minions to call on

It's sensible to heed the old adage: many swords make lighter work

As you progress through the game, old bosses reappear in greater numbers

pick swordsmen or archers? Through trial and error you'll discover which legions are most effective for each level and boss battle.

Experience points and power-ups allow you to upgrade each legion as you wish. For example, a legion may consist of a lone swordsman, but upgrade it and you'll be joined by a trio: upgrade again and you'll have a small army to aid you.

Chaos Legion scores big by daring to be so simple in an age where gameplay is often clouded by trivial extras. The legions, their enhancements and the role-player elements add depth and replay value to what is essentially repetitive hack 'n' slash action.

The closest comparison to Chaos Legion in terms of gameplay is Space Invaders – seriously! You're presented with wave after wave of enemies, which you have to clear before you can progress. And with combo multipliers and score grading at the end of each level this feels so much like a return to old-skool values you almost want to throw a reunion party. Maybe that's what they meant by gothic opera? CVG

Games VERDICT

A huge sword, thousands upon thousands of enemies to slaughter – why hasn't anyone thought of doing this before? They did? Well it certainly wasn't this much fun. **Alex H**

- Simple, challenging, fun gameplay
- Loads of enemies on screen
- Tactical elements

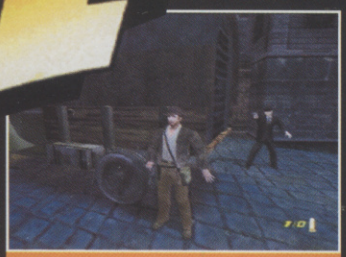
- Disappointing backdrops
- Uninspired soundtrack
- Bosses could be better

8 OUT OF TEN

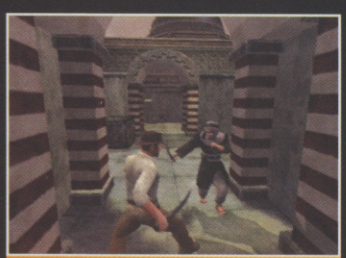
IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Devil May Cry (PS2) Lord Of The Rings (PS2)

INDIANA JONES AND THE EMPEROR'S TOMB

PUT ON YOUR RETRO CAP FOR SOME TOMB RAIDING FROM THE MAN WHO INSPIRED LARA CROFT



Taking cover can make the difference between a dead Nazi and a dead Indy



Recreate famous moments from the films by shooting blade-wielding maniacs

GAME INFO ONLINE GAMING

● COST: £39.99 ● PLAYERS: 1 ● OUT: AUGUST
● PUB: LUCASARTS ● DEV: THE COLLECTIVE ● WWW.LUCASARTS.COM/PRODUCTS/INDIANA

Ninjas feel the end of a table leg like everyone else

Long before Lara was slinking around mossy ruins Indiana Jones was showing us how tomb raiding should be done. A true original, his movies were full of action and excitement, booby-trapped with fantastic moments of whip-cracking tension.

But is Indy still up to the job or should he be sent to stay with the other fossils at the archaeologist's retirement home?

LARA WHO?

Tomb Raider wrote the book on this style of game and The Emperor's Tomb hasn't added many new chapters. It's familiar stuff: beat up bad guy, climb over walls, swing on vines, pull levers, snatch ancient doodah. However, Indy has always had a testosterone-charged charm that Miss Croft can't hope to match.

When Indy gets into a scrap he can pick up chairs or bottles, redecorate faces with a shovel, blast away with pistols and shotguns, or rely on his own meaty fists. The variety is fun and when it all really kicks off there are more socks than in your underwear drawer.

Indy also has a few tricks Lara doesn't, and his trademark whip is great fun to use. In combat you can use it like a rolled-up wet towel to flick out at enemies or snatch weapons from their hands. Most exciting is the ability to swing across vast chasms, which becomes palm-sweatingly tense when you have to chain swings together to clear the biggest drops.

INDY ON TOUR

The action takes place in several seriously huge

Indy used his palm-reading skills to make friends with the zombie

"Look at my fist! Ain't it a beaut?"

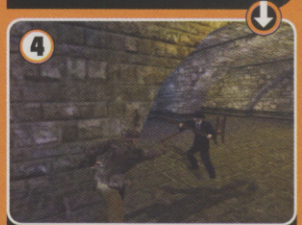
WHIP-ROUND

Imagine Lara Croft wielding a whip. A pleasant image. Now imagine a stubbly man wielding that whip. Not so pleasant. But useful. Indy can use his whip in combat and to cross gaps, adding an extra element to the familiar gameplay.

1 A gaping chasm and a handy chandelier – it's whippin' time!

2 Wrap some leather around and swing across, releasing at the right moment

3 Alternatively, use your whip to snare your very own no-good Nazi



4 Like the look of that table leg? Then whip it clean from his evil paws

That's going to sting in the shower. The variety of weapons is fantastic

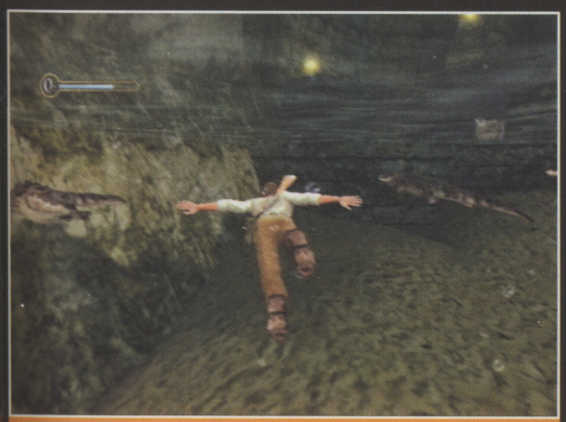
LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Well, Mr Jones, you're an archaeologist with a sense of adventure looking for a place with character, plenty of mystery and the odd goon or three to shoot. Let's have a look at what we have for you...

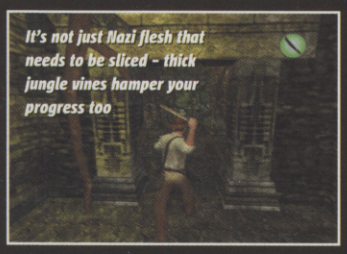
How about this nice rustic tomb in rural Ceylon?

This gothic castle in Prague has some stunning views

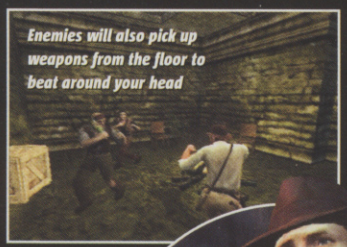
Or how about this houseboat benefiting from a pleasantly secluded location and inquisitive local wildlife? Tough choice!



Indy does his best attempt at an impression of mad Aussie Steve Irwin, although alligator wrestling is not his strong point



It's not just Nazi flesh that needs to be sliced - thick jungle vines hamper your progress too



Enemies will also pick up weapons from the floor to beat around your head

Smash a few bottles for that bar-room brawl atmosphere

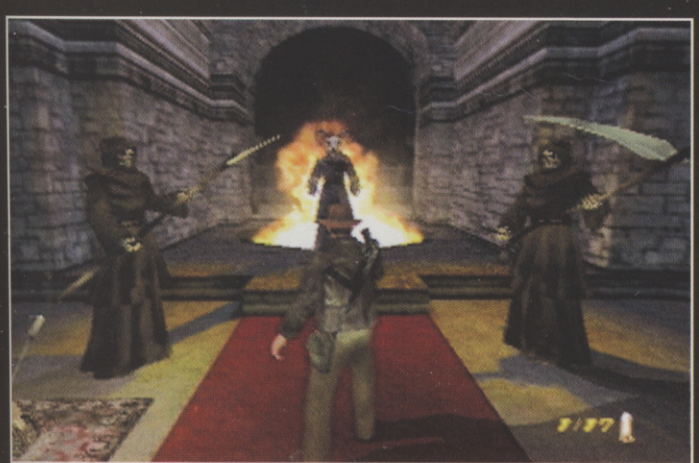
locations split into sections, starting in an ancient tomb before taking Indiana across Europe and onwards to China in the search for a fabled artefact.

Unfortunately the visuals are fairly bland and blocky. There is a frustrating amount of slowdown and jerkiness that doesn't really affect gameplay but spoils your enjoyment of what should be a realistic world. Loading delays are also a problem, especially when you die and just want to get back into the action.

But our main gripe is that everything is just so familiar, especially with Lara back on the scene right now. Indy's gritty style and bloody-knuckle charm don't help to make the game anything new or innovative, but it does succeed in creating a challenging and exciting experience with all the touches that made the movies so special. If that's what you're after then Indy's your man.

The likeness to rugged actor Harrison Ford ain't half bad

Indy goes for a night on the town as the action takes to the streets



This nice-looking chap has to be given several artefacts. What a waste

Indy's found Bin Laden! Someone tell the US!

games VERDICT

It's derivative and visually flawed, but hard-hitting action, some nice touches from the films and Indy's rugged panache make this a welcome return for the original tomb raider. **Graeme**

- Huge and challenging levels
- Hard-hitting brawls with loads of weapons
- Classic music makes you feel part of the film

- Doesn't add much to the genre
- Repetitive game structure
- Some long loading delays

7 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Angel Of Darkness (PS2)

FORMULA ONE 2003

Formula 1® OFFICIALLY LICENSED PRODUCT

ANOTHER MONTH... ANOTHER F1 GAME. BUT IS OFFICIAL ALWAYS THE BEST?

With EA Sports' F1 Career Challenge already screaming away from the starting grid, Sony's latest update has a tough challenge on its hands to catch the leader. But is an official licence enough to help Formula One 2003 take the flag?

GAME INFO | ONLINE GAMING | COST: £39.99 | PLAYERS: 1-4 | OUT: JULY 11 | PUB: SONY | DEV: STUDIO LIVERPOOL | UK.PLAYSTATION.COM

The updated 2003 season rules add new twists to the familiar championship challenge

AS REAL AS IT GETS

Formula One 2003 is the first fruit of a new deal with Formula One Administration Ltd that gives Sony exclusive rights to the franchise for the next four years. This means that the game is the only title to feature the most up-to-date 2003 season statistics, along with every F1 driver, the ten F1 teams and, of course, all 16 of the Grand Prix circuits.

This authenticity is further enhanced by the inclusion of new rules from the 2003 season, even extending to the weekend regulations where Fridays involve an initial qualifying heat, Saturdays the all-or-nothing one-lap qualifying session and Sundays the race itself. The developers have also tweaked the multiplayer mode, the fun Hot Seat challenge now allowing four petrol-heads to hit the track without the need for a Multitap.

SECOND PLACE

However, while the game looks, sounds and feels better than its predecessor, Formula One 2003 just isn't as engaging as its EA Sports rival. Although both games handle well and capture the difficulties and thrills of controlling an F1 racer, the option to create your own driver in F1 Career Challenge is more compelling than just taking charge of a famous racer. A simple innovation, but enough to help EA stay seconds ahead of Sony's official title. CVG

All the cars feature their 2003 season liveries, making them look slick, sleek and sexy

Real-life track revisions currently being made in Hungaroring and Suzuka have been included

TAKE THE WEATHER WITH YOU

As if the game wasn't realistic enough already, the coders have included a range of weather effects that can punish your performance and make the difference between taking the cup and limping over the finish line, tail between legs.

Even in arcade mode beginners are best sticking to sunny conditions

With water splashing up from the cars ahead, racing in the rain is treacherous

Fail to master the slippery corners and you'll skid into your rivals every time

computer and video games VERDICT

Includes everything fans could want *and* untouchable realism, but the ability to create your own driver and take them to the top in F1 Career Challenge is more rewarding. **Dave**

- Improved car AI makes rivals react realistically
- Expertly captures the 2003 season
- Improved multiplayer to keep you hooked
- Too similar to its predecessor
- No choice to create your own driver, so less engaging than EA Sports' title

7 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... F1 Career Challenge (PS2, Xbox, PC)

Simple touches like helicopters hovering above the track add excitement

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Exquisite Execution

"Stylish and addictive. A cracking shooter." Cube Magazine

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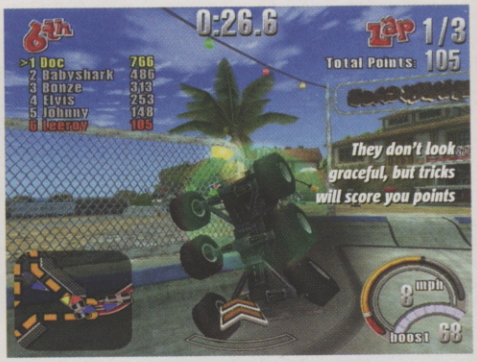


There's plenty going on on-screen in the various stunt modes that feature in the game

SMASH CARS

HA HA VROOOM VROOOM

What it lacks in depth, Smash Cars makes up for in pure racing fun.

The pace is blisteringly fast and the crazy handling and non-restrictive courses make for some crazy dashes across land, sea and military installations.

You'll end up loving the hazards for their inventiveness just as much as you'll be hating them for scuppering your prized pole position.

No, it's not Monty Python, but rather an enraged beach bum

Avoid hitting vehicles ten times your size in head-on collisions!

These are the type of army men you definitely don't want to play with

GAME INFO
ONLINE GAMING
COST: £19.99 PLAYERS: 1-2 OUT: NOW
PUB: METRO 3D DEV: CREAT STUDIO WWW.CREATSTUDIO.COM/GAMES

NICE-PRICE MOTORING MADNESS IN MINIATURE. SCREEEEEECH!

LEE SKITTRELL

If you're the sort of person who has never felt the thrill of remote-control racing with buddies (possibly because you always bought the car with the same frequency as your mates' vehicles by mistake), Smash Cars is for you.

Chase your remote-controlled rivals around real-world courses with giant real-world hazards like people and, er, UFOs. And at just 20 quid it costs a great deal less than your average RC car. Result!

If we were puerile we'd make a comment about bashing the helmet

SMASHING DRIVE

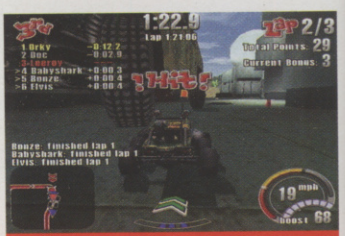
Okay, so it's never going to be a Gran Turismo-beater, but what Smash Cars manages to hit right on the nail is the feeling that it's more than just a regular racing game shrunken down for novelty effect.

Each of the cars handles in a suitably wacky way, with some built for speed and others for maximum trick ability. The courses are wide-open expanses of land with markers that suggest the course route. Shortcuts abound for the crafty racer.

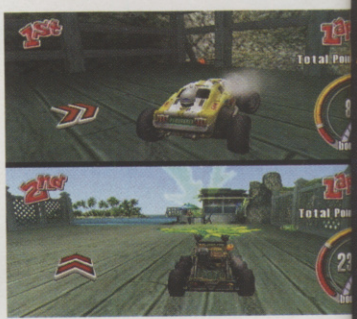
There are excellent hazards too, in the form of angry sunbathers who will boot your motor off course if you pass too close or go-kart racers enjoying a race on the same track as you and your miniature rivals. Bonus points are rewarded for smacking into smaller objects like gas cans and beach balls, but this slows you down, adding just a smidgeon of strategy to races.

With stunt courses, cool cars to unlock and multiplayer fun for two, Smash Cars offers many more laughs than you could reasonably expect from a budget-priced title.

You can drive pretty much wherever you want but you must hit the checkpoints



There are some hazards on the tracks that you really should try to avoid...



Player One goes for a cheeky shortcut off the pier. Not recommended in a real car

Putting the suspension to the test

You can take your car into water but who knows what's lurking?

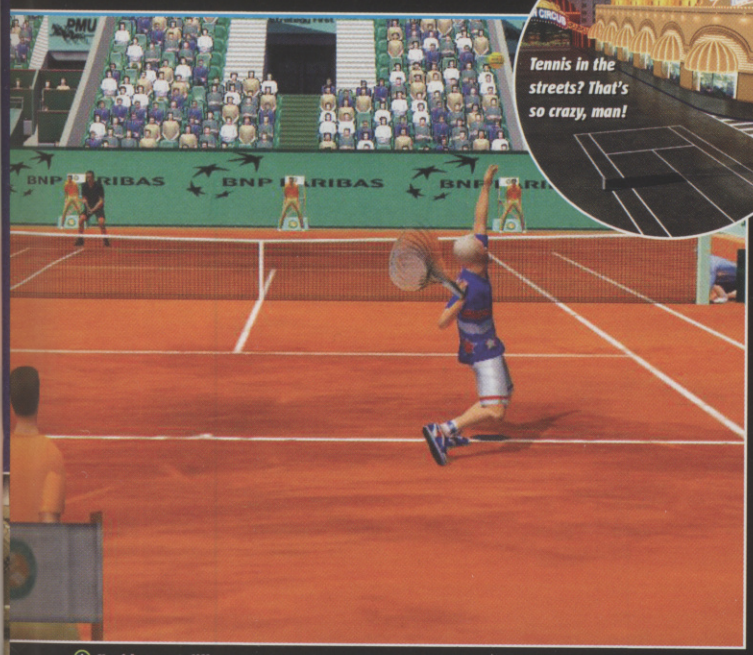
Games VERDICT

Smash Cars is certainly one of the best value budget games we've seen and far and away the most fun remote-control car game out there. Bargain, and a laugh. **Lee**

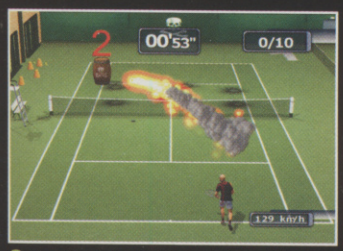
- ■ Impressive speed and visuals in solo play
- ■ Totally true to the fun spirit of RC racing
- ■ Inventive blurring of fantasy and reality
- ■ Frame rate drops a bit in two-player mode
- ■ The smashy-crashy 'chicken' game is weak
- ■ Lacks the depth of the big name racing games

7 OUT OF TEN

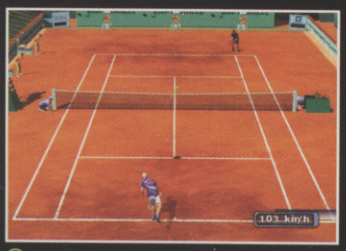
IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... ■ Midtown Madness 3 (Xbox), Speed Kings (PS2)



You'd expect different camera views and that's just what NGT gives you



Have fun in the training missions before dying of boredom in the Championships



It may be bright orange but this clay court is hardly a feast for the eyes, is it?

Next Generation Tennis 2003

GAME INFO ONLINE GAMING ● COST: £29.99 ● PLAYERS: 1-4 ● OUT: AUGUST 24 ● PUB: WANADOO ● DEV: CARAPACE ● WWW.WANADOO.COM

RACQUETS AT THE READY FOR HUMDRUM TENNIS

Even with the gameplay improvements over last year's Next Gen Tennis it's hard to tell just who Wanadoo thinks it's fooling.

Improved ball physics and added ball boys and girls don't in our minds warrant a purchase of this if you own the first game – or any other tennis game.

DOUBLE TEAM TOURNAMENT

At least there's a load of different game modes, including a career mode that features arcade-style training challenges. Outside of the four-player doubles matches, these challenges are where you'll find the most fun in the game and it's criminal that there aren't more of them.

But the actual lob, volley and slice gameplay is as standard as it could ever be, which is a shame given the unremarkable visuals and unimpressive character animations.

What's even more disappointing is that there are just five licensed professional real-life players to choose from.

Next Generation Tennis 2003 is not terrible, but isn't it sad that years after the masterful Virtua Tennis, recent rival racquet games are still landing way wide of the mark.

computer and video games VERDICT

Henman-heads will probably like this updated version of Next Generation Tennis, but it's a very dry and flat experience that simply doesn't offer enough fun in single-player. **Lee**

- Lots of different play modes to try out
- Arcade-style training is a blast for a while
- Unlockable bonus games are pretty good

- Waiting a long time for the games to load
- Lack of recognisable professional players
- It's just so horribly dull compared to Virtua

6 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... ■ Virtua Tennis 2 (DC, PS2) ■ Mario Tennis (N64)

HAIRY MEN WITH HORNED HELMETS ATTEMPT TO FIND THEIR WAY HOME

GAME INFO ONLINE GAMING ● COST: £29.99 ● PLAYERS: 1 ● OUT: NOW ● PUB: VIVENDI ● DEV: BLIZZARD ● WWW.BLIZZARD.COM/BLIZZCLASSIC

Vikings, eh? They're a lovable sort even if they did invade our country, harass our ladies, pilfer our resources and generally make a longboat-sized nuisance of themselves. Fortunately these Vikings are more concerned with getting home than plundering and pillaging.

I COULD EAT A NORSE

Still fairly original considering that this is the reincarnation of any early puzzle game, you are in control of three characters that you can switch between at any time. Each has his own unique skill that must be used to defeat the puzzles thrown at you, and combinations of their abilities are the only way to survive.

It's puzzle-heavy, brain-mashing, trial-and-error stuff. Be ready to die time and time again just to discover how to complete the level – only to repeat the process all over again.

It's punishing but also compelling and the rush you get when you finally beat a tricky level is worth the effort. This is how games used to be – simple to play but rock hard to defeat, and that's not necessarily a bad thing.

Teamwork is key, and the puzzles require use of all three Vikings' abilities

Olaf's shield deters enemies, fireballs and presumably razor blades, judging by that beard

computer and video games VERDICT

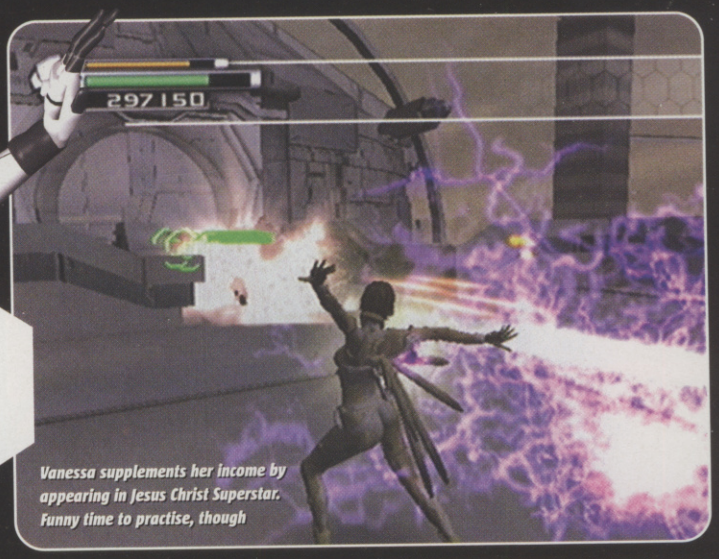
Good old-fashioned platform-puzzling that taunts your failure with barbarian glee but offers immense satisfaction when all your hard work finally pays off. **Graeme**

- Challenging but never unfair
- Gentle learning curve to ease you in
- Vikings – they were a hard bunch

- Very retro graphics
- Can be painfully punishing
- Structure's quite repetitive

7 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... ■ Metroid Fusion (GBA) ■ Puzzle Fighter (GBA)



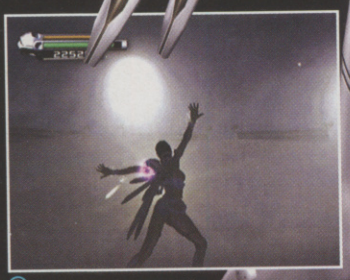
Vanessa supplements her income by appearing in Jesus Christ Superstar. Funny time to practise, though

P.N.03™

PRODUCT NUMBER

GAME INFO | ONLINE GAMING | COST: £39.99 | PLAYERS: 1 | OUT: AUGUST 29 | PUB: CAPCOM | DEV: CAPCOM | WWW.CAPCOM-EUROPE.COM/PN03

SWINGING SHOOT 'EM UP ACTION IN CAPCOM'S CUBE EXCLUSIVE



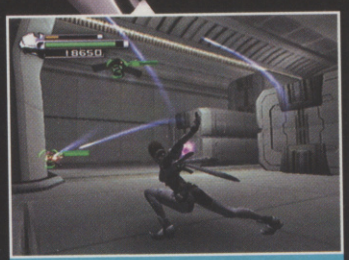
Vanessa can't escape the lure of the spotlight, even in the heat of battle

Vanessa Z Schneider surveys her surroundings. The dull monotonous hum of the base's interior is broken only by the furtive squeak of her leather-clad buttocks as she tiptoes cautiously through the compound.

Suddenly, the familiar whirr of machinery signals the arrival of the first wave of mech-warriors. With a resigned sigh, she raises her arms ready to do battle. Let's dance!

The first of Capcom's 'big five' GameCube exclusives to hit these shores takes the old-skool shoot 'em up and shoves a kipper in its knickers with a mix of Space Channel 5-style shape-throwing shenanigans and Matrix-like neo-industrial chic.

Vanessa crackles with energy as she blasts those aliens for all she is worth - which is a lot



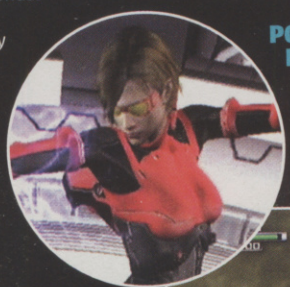
Energy drive attacks are always executed using Vanessa's trademark flamboyance

Handily strewn-about blobs of gas help replenish Vanessa's health and shields. Stinky

DANCING SAGE, MEGA BITCH

Hired to thwart the malfunctioning Computer Arms Management System of a desolate colonial settlement, bounty hunter Vanessa must battle her away across storm-ravaged planetary surfaces and robot-infested military compounds. Using her custom Aegis suit, she can lock on and decimate the mechanical onslaught with her rapid-firing palm-mounted lasers and devastating special move-like energy attacks. All the while flexing, strutting and prancing in time to the pulsating soundtrack.

P.N.03 is the epitome of old-skool cool. The simple mission structures see you charging through levels like a homicidal ballerina, utilising Vanessa's volley of graceful but deadly defensive and offensive manoeuvres to dodge and eradicate the endless assault of robotic parasites – blasting and cartwheeling your way to the final apocalyptic hoedown with the end of level boss.



POINTS MEAN PRIZES

The hook here isn't dazzlingly complex gameplay mechanics, but the obsessive quest for bigger

Outdoor levels in particular don't play too well compared to the other sections

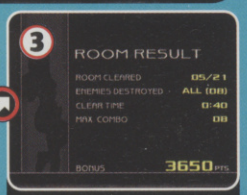
Some sneaky enemies can scramble your suit, making energy drive attacks impossible

COMBO-HARVESTER

To swell up your score faster than a hamster in a microwave, you can string together attacks in a combo-stylee – provided that the on-screen counter doesn't plummet to zero before you have a chance to decommission the next metallic miscreant.

Ready the valiant Vanessa and blast that pesky robot with all of your might into a meeting with its mecha...

Try to destroy the next threat before the combo-counter runs out



The game tallies your bumper bounty of points whenever you leave a room

Vanessa adopts a deceptively graceful dragonfly-esque pose

If you don't finish them off fast, your opponents will break out the big guns

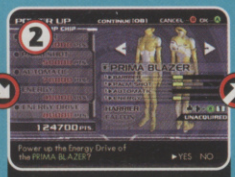
Enemies that appear later in the game have firepower to shame a nuclear warhead

SUITS YOU, SIR!

Vanessa's customisable Aegis suit can be upgraded to rock-tastic proportions as the game progresses.

Kiss goodbye to those hard-earned points, though – bum-laser modifications don't come cheap.

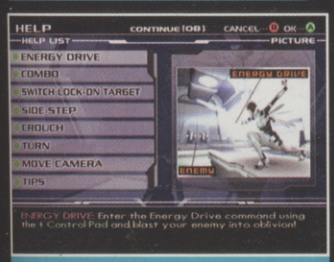
We all grow tired of the humdrum old energy attacks from time to time, so...



...nip into the upgrade shop with your bulging sack of points at the ready...

...and you'll be dropping jaws with your posterior-mounted death beams in no time!

Proceedings are overseen by your shady client, who'll brief you before each mission

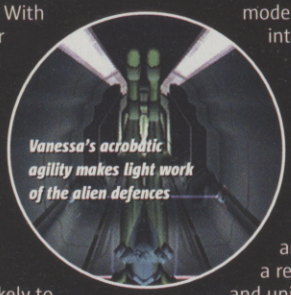


The Help screen records Vanessa's vast arsenal of moves in case of memory lapse

points and better power-ups. Obliterate the marauding mechanoids in rapid succession to rack up your score and use your points to beef up Vanessa's Aegis suit with extra firepower and protection or more elaborate energy attacks.

Mostly, though, your precious points will be going towards that juicy stock of continues. With a difficulty curve steeper than the price of a drink in a Soho strip joint, P.N.03 will have old-skool gamers dribbling with misty-eyed joy while everyone else gently rocks back and forth, weeping into their upturned palms.

Casual gamers are likely to be repelled by the repetitive shoot-and-dodge action, with its scarcity of bells or whistles to encourage further exploration of the game. Indeed repetitiveness is P.N.03's major failing – with only a limited number of upgrades and environments, it doesn't take long before it dawns on you that you have seen all the game has to offer. Particularly as most levels share the same room and corridor models, just shuffled around into a different order.



Vanessa's acrobatic agility makes light work of the alien defences

BACK TO SKOOL

For anyone looking for a fast-paced, no-brainer blast of retro old-skool action, P.N.03's polished combination of visual and audio bravado offers a refreshing, atmospheric and uniquely chic twist on the shoot 'em up formula. However, the paper-thin gameplay mechanics and repetitive action make this one difficult to recommend beyond a rental for everyone else.

Vanessa shows off her palm-mounted lasers

Computer and Video Games VERDICT

Here is a uniquely styled adrenalin pumper of a game, whose tense and engaging elements suck you in – until the shallow and repetitive gameplay starts to reveal itself. **Matt**

- Epitome of hardcore old-skool excitement
- Ultra-stylish GameCube presentation
- Vanessa's figure-hugging catsuit

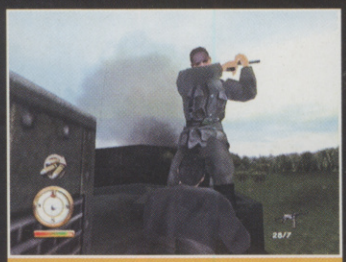
- Frustrating difficulty level
- It's a shooter so expect repetitive gameplay
- Ultimately its appeal may prove too niche

7 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Space Channel 5 (PS2), Ikaguna (GC)

THE GREAT ESCAPE

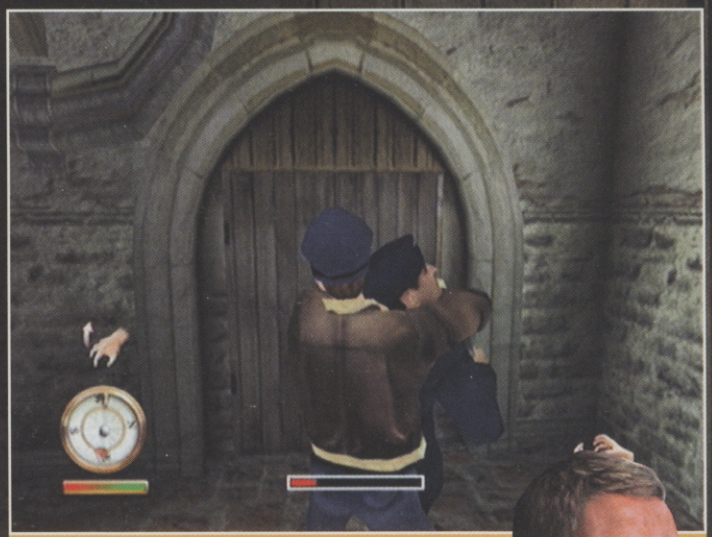
CRY FREEDOM IN THIS WWII ACTION-ADVENTURE BLAST



Don't get too close to soldiers or they won't hold back on giving you a vicious battering

GAME INFO

● COST: £39.99 ● PLAYERS: 1 ● OUT: AUGUST 29
● PUB: SCI ● DEV: SCI ● WWW.SCI.CO.UK/GAMES



Creep up on guards and administer a WWE-style sleeper hold

If congested roads, tacky pubs and under-performing sports teams make you bemoan your nationality, simply watch The Great Escape and you'll soon feel abnormally proud to be British again.

The classic war film, made back in 1963, is the business when it comes to cheering on the boys. If you haven't seen it, you should have done – it's on TV every Christmas and has become as much a part of our seasonal festivities as roast turkey and Brussels sprouts.

TAKE THAT, JERRY

The game-of-the-film boasts deliciously varied missions. There are shoot-outs on trains, countryside motorcycle chases and a plethora of camp escape attempts. You'll need to solve a few basic puzzles too, such as deciding how to fix a vehicle without being spotted, or finding a diversion so that you slip stealthily into Nazi quarters.

It's got good ideas, then, but the game's main problem lies in its lack of conviction – it's hard to suspend belief when guards disregard the fact that you've left about five doors open and character models can look like freaky puppets. The action sequences feel clunky and are likely to frustrate as much as they enthral.

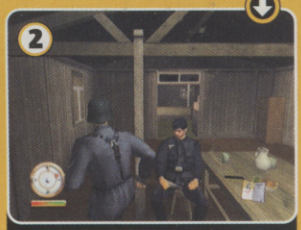
That said, this is still considerably more thrilling than last year's Prisoner Of War. Crawling across night-time camp turf, evading sweeping spotlights and sneaking daringly behind guards can be genuinely nervy. Additionally, the variety in missions makes this definitely worth a peek if you're a fan of the film, and worth a look even if you're not.

I'M A CREEP

Although missions are linear, gameplay still throws up numerous ways of beating the Jerries.

You can creep in and out of shadows, hide behind walls, or quietly smash a bottle over a watchman's head. Elsewhere you might need a disguise, a truck or, even better, a gun so you can blast those Nazis to bits.

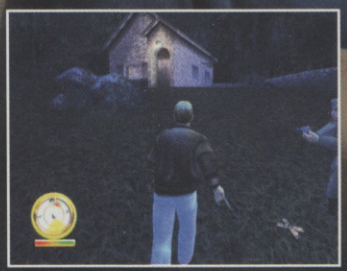
Wriggle along on your front and wait for the enemy to move away



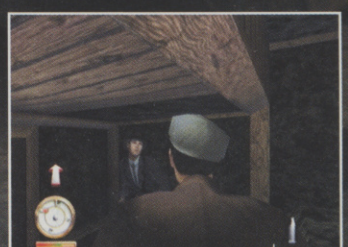
Disguise yourself as a fellow Nazi to access areas that are off-limits

Or go tally-ho and enjoy some smashing train-top shoot-outs

Using the Dpad, you can peer out from around corners and behind obstacles like this plane



A spotted Hilts makes a valiant dash for freedom in the dark woods beyond. Brave man



This famous tunnel scene has been ported directly from the classic movie

computer and video games VERDICT

A flawed but entertaining action-adventure, perhaps more suited to fans of the film than total newcomers. Varied for a movie licence, though, and packs a hearty challenge. **Stephen**

- ■ A good blend of stealth, puzzles and action
- ■ Oozes tension and suspense
- ■ The levels are well designed

- ■ Talking to characters is extremely basic
- ■ The action parts are unsophisticated
- ■ Feels a bit clumsy and lacks gloss

7 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... ■ POW (PS2, Xbox, PC) ■ MOH: Allied Assault (PC)

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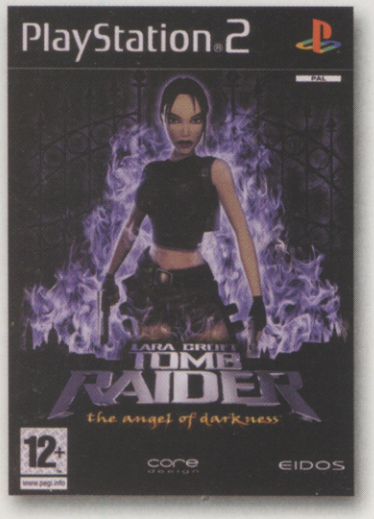

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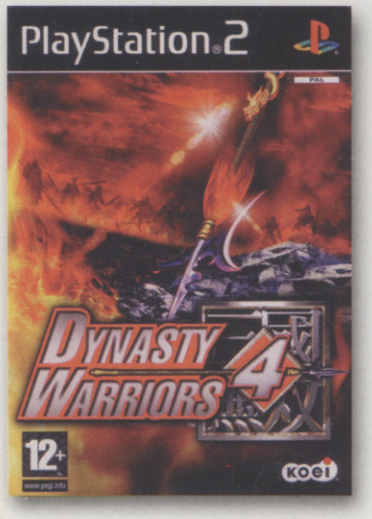

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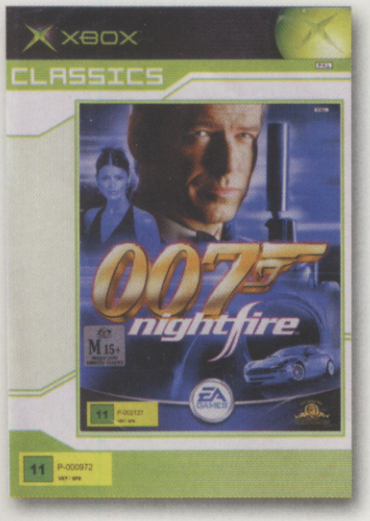

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WARIO WORLD

ANTI-PLUMBER MONEY TROUBLES

Spin on the flower to activate tricks later in the level

GAME INFO | ONLINE GAMING | COST: £39.99 | PLAYERS: 1 | OUT: NOW | PUB: NINTENDO | DEV: NINTENDO | WWW.WARIOWORLD.COM

The Phantom Menace. England vs Brazil. The world is full of disappointing missed opportunities, and now Wario World joins them.

When first announced, it seemed a superb prospect – Wario's Game Boy hijinks given a new lease of life by the GameCube's awesome power – it couldn't possibly lose!

Or could it? This has the potential to be a genre-defining game, full of innovative ideas and original and funny status changes – like turning into a zombie, or being flattened in order to progress to different parts of a level. A strong resemblance to the Game Boy versions, in fact.

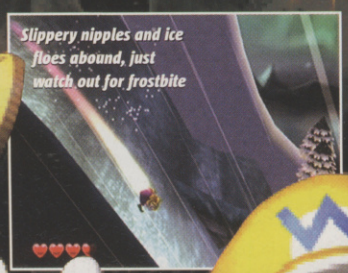
However, while the graphics are bursting with vibrant colour, and the sound is hilarious, with Wario screaming, "I'm the best!" at any time he sees fit, the gameplay just doesn't follow suit. What we are left with is a pretty but substandard platformer.

CAPITALIST CHAOS

The story begins with Wario's riches being turned into marauding monsters, leading him into a platform-filled world full of enemies in different guises. The enemies fall into one of

There's all sorts going off in Wario's world, not all of it good

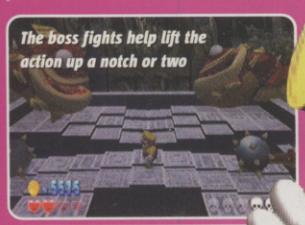
The erupting volcano effect looks very pretty


Slippery nipples and ice floes abound, just watch out for frostbite

SAVING GRACES

Despite the game's bad points, the sun does manage to penetrate the ominous clouds in places.

Boss fights are large-scale and colourful and we like the Mario Sunshine-style bonus 'sky' levels, where you travel across varying puzzles to reach the red diamond. Just a shame that this returns you to the lands of boredom.


The boss fights help lift the action up a notch or two

Avoid the twin fishy dragon creatures' fiery breath

Careful not to lose your lunch in this upside-downy world

Wario probably likes the pain inflicted from these spiked mines

Make like a crazed lumberjack and attack the tree for fun and more coins

Many of the puzzles involve leaping from these squashy balls

WARIO'S MOVES

Wario can perform all of his attacks straight out of the box. This would be fine if there were loads of 'em to learn but instead there is just a handful of moves, none of which is particularly spectacular.

Using combinations of button presses and stick-swivelling you can grab, spin and hurl enemies and items about the place. It's a nice idea but it feels like somebody forgot to develop it further. Boo!

Twizzle the stick to make Wazza spin on the spot

It's effective when you're holding masonry too

Relive all your nursery rhyme fantasies and shimmy up the beanstalk

Give hay fever sufferers some extra grief by exploding these spore pods all over the shop

Charge up energy to run and punch at enemies

three types. Wario can pick up and throw them, piledrive or spin them. Drooling yet? No, we didn't think so.

THESE COINS LACK SHINE

This is run-of-the-mill stuff. Where Wario could have been affected by his surroundings and interacted with them, his game is instead reduced to a poor man's platformer, with so little of the freedom and enjoyment of Mario Sunshine. The levels are samey and the gameplay repetitive.

It's not irredeemably awful by any means, but it is unremarkable enough that you run the risk of your body rejecting it and going into full shock, so surprising is it that this is a first-party Nintendo game. It's a laugh while you bounce through the first few levels, but the realisation that it's not going to get any more complex dawns all too soon and somewhat painfully.

It even features age-old platform game staples like ice- and circus-themed levels. With so much scope for original and interesting platforming to be had with a next-gen Wario game, such reliance on clichés stinks of laziness. For shame, Nintendo!

The yellow pads relate to switches elsewhere. It's not very subtle

Computer and Video Games VERDICT

A lazy, poor effort from Nintendo. This unremarkable platformer could have been so much more. Think Mario Sunshine, without any of the good parts. **Ed**

- Graphics are nice though not spectacular
- No camera problems at all. Whoo!
- You'll mumble at Wario's crazy mumblings

- Not enough variety to the action levels
- No affinity with the GB versions
- Too simplistic to be considered truly next-gen

6 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Mario Sunshine (GC) Freak Out (PS2)

RTX RED ROCK™

FAST-FORWARD TO THE YEAR 2103 AND THE UNIVERSE IS A HOSTILE PLACE

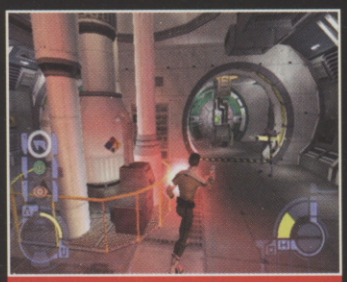
Modelling the Hercule Poirot monocle of the future

GAME INFO ONLINE GAMING

● COST: £39.99 ● PLAYERS: 1 ● OUT: SEPTEMBER 5

● PUB: ACTIVISION ● DEV: LUCASARTS ● WWW.RTXREDROCK.COM

Danger lurks all over the place deep underground in the diamond mines



Aha, a nasty, frightening alien to get rid of. Or not, as the case may be

Being an action hero certainly has its rewards

You have to wonder what we Earthlings have done to offend. Science fiction's myriad alien breeds all seem to want us dead.

You can just imagine them, flying by in their flash, silvery spaceships, mischievous grins spread across rows of gnarly faces: "Hmm, Earth, now there's a funny planet, don't you think? Let's blow it up. After all, what has it contributed to universal society? Cricket... Chris Evans... The Spice Girls' back catalogue?" Okay, point taken.

WHEELER OF FORTUNE

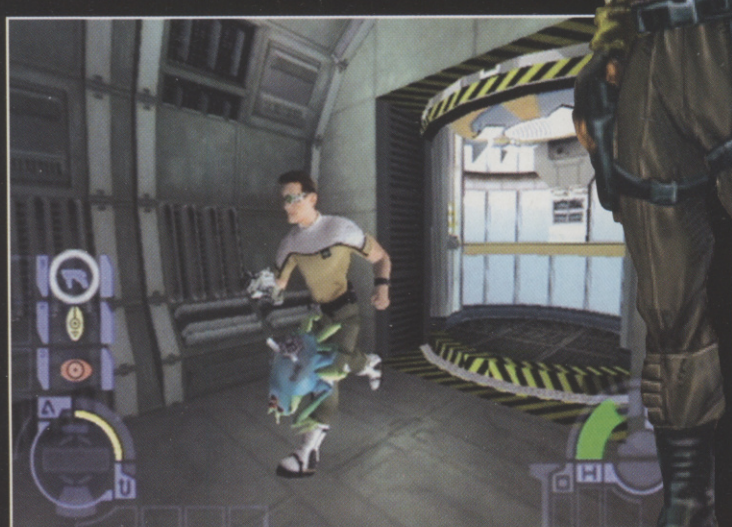
RTX Red Rock is a game that shares this human-hating theme. It's got aliens and they don't like you very much. They have attacked our humble world, and now the extraterrestrial blighters, known as 'Light Emitting Demons', have swarmed into the human colonies on Mars and flexed their muscles there too.

At least we have you to call upon, playing as a suave, ice-cool action-junkie named Wheeler with an insatiable thirst for excitement.

This third-person action-adventure offers puzzles, exploration and combat by the rocket-load. Gameplay has been snazzed up with some clever touches: with an enhanced artificial eye Wheeler can switch between views as he investigates desolate space stations and claustrophobic mines.

LOST IN SPACE

Unfortunately the game has its bad points too. The aliens themselves are a bit of a disappointment. They



Hey, Mr Alien, you're in my way - will you please stop bugging me

Creep along tunnels to get past locked doors

DOLL PARTS

Helping you on your mission is a robotic dolly named Iris, who can be accessed via special terminals.

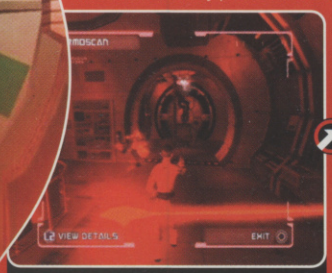
Despite her mechanical background, she's a bit flirty and liable to excite with a sexy frown. She also reminds us of Holly from cult TV sitcom Red Dwarf.

The sultry Iris is really just a portable computer module with human interface

You can also use her chip to drive robots or vehicles like this powerdrill

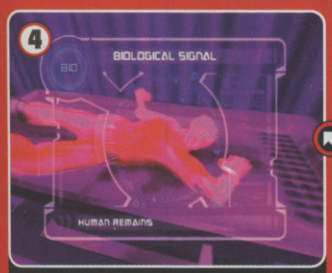
HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU, KID

Wheeler's synthetic eye can come in pretty handy and adds to his standard vision with four unique views. These are used for revealing operable machinery or navigating his way through missions. However, while it's a great idea, switching between the different modes may prove a bit of a chore.



Thermoscan enables you to see enemies that are hidden or invisible

Naviscan, meanwhile, reveals where you are and where you need to go



And finally, Electroscan highlights machines or controls you can use

Bioscan cleverly detects any foreign life forms and forensic residues

Invisible 'technicians' can be a right pain in the neck – so use Thermoscan to spot them!

may be labelled 'demons' but they wouldn't be any less devilish if they wore flower power shirts and had pink carnations tucked behind their ears.

A poor combat system means that fighting them is pretty dull too – skirmishes often drift into bouts of random blasting thanks to a target-locking trigger that seems to think static walls pose more threat than missile-spurting spacecraft. Solving puzzles relies too heavily on lady luck and an awkward camera rarely seems capable of swinging in the direction you want it to.

With so much tedium on show, it's not surprising that RTX Red Rock falls way too short of its lofty promise. It's no disaster by any means, but let's just say it doesn't compare favourably when stood alongside giants like Xbox's Brute Force. In space, no one can hear you scream. They might if you play this.

Games VERDICT

Nice ideas and a lavish comic book feel fail to compensate for the niggling flaws. Compelling enough, but there's just too much aimless wandering to make it truly enjoyable. **Stephen**

- Atmospheric, comic book look
- Relatively varied gameplay
- Artificial eye works well

- Misleading puzzles
- Dodgy combat and weedy weapons
- Camera can be annoying

6 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Metroid Prime (GC) ■ Mace Griffin (PS2, Xbox)

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DIGIMON Digital Monsters BATTLE SPIRIT

GAME INFO | ONLINE GAMING | COST: £24.99 | PLAYERS: 1-X | OUT: SEPTEMBER 12 | PUB: ATARI | DEV: BANDAI | WWW.DIGIMON.COM

WHEN CUTE CHARACTERS COLLIDE

We've long taken to anything with a 'mon' in its title and it's a strategy that hasn't failed us yet.

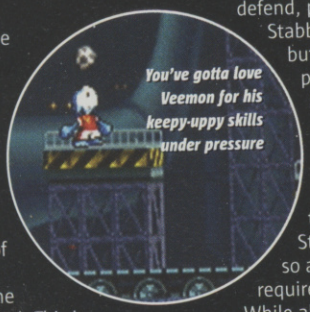
Behold Digimon Battle Spirit, one of the cutest GBA games we've seen. Like Nintendo's Smash Bros, it's a simple versus battler, except this one offers bonkers Digimon techniques within volatile, multi-tiered arenas.

BRINGEMON

Obviously this is a game for your younger relatives, and anyone else who doesn't care how old they are where Digimon is involved.

There's no point getting all high and mighty over the lack of truly great fighting strategy, or wasting the GBA's technical potential. This is your straightforward character game, so pushing the boundaries of design was never an option.

However, just like Smash Bros, it's a genuinely funny game to play against a friend. It also fits the bill if you eat/sleep Digimon. There's all manner of secret characters to unlock and the little guys are bursting with charisma, despite the basic visual style.


You've gotta love Veemon for his keepy-uppy skills under pressure

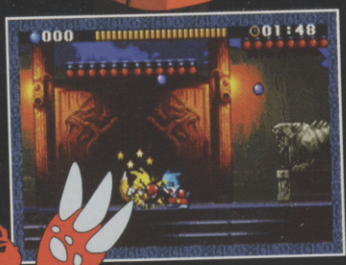
BACK TO BASICS

Just the A and B buttons are used, giving you a jump and a small range of attacks. To defend, press and hold 'down'. Stabbing at the Attack button results in simple punch-type moves. Anything more impressive than that is done by combining directions plus attack and/or jump. Now this is a far cry from Street Fighter or Tekken, so accuracy is not a requirement.

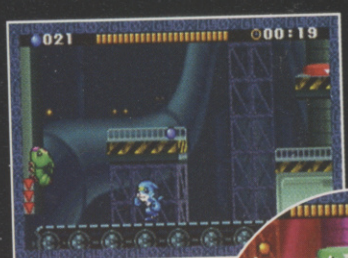
While all well and good for getting through the one-player quest, it makes a joke of the two-player link-up battles. But you're a fool if you take this seriously. Love it for the crazy, individual displays of Digimon techniques and try to get your hits in first. It is, after all, plain funny to beat on someone with Terriermon's stupid floppy ears, or Agumon's puny fireballs.

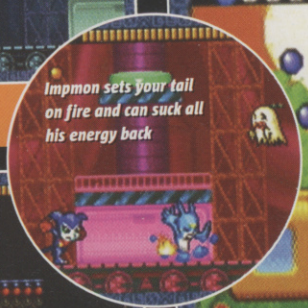
This brand of manic action is confused even more by the trap-sprung nature of the arenas. While you're trying to land a few slaps on the rival 'mon, critters poke their heads from the ground, lightning strikes from above, and conveyor belts move this way and that. Each Digimon has its own arena, but is still vulnerable to the same dangers, so it's for show rather than strategic use.

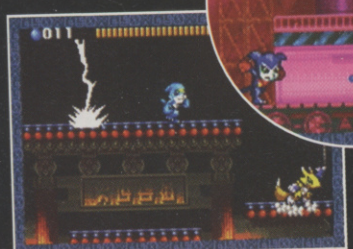
The Digimon theme is treated with respect, so if it's a few comedy scraps you're after, well, ta daa... here you go! Beyond that, though, it's tough to think of big enough reasons for you to choose Battle Spirit over Super Street Fighter II, for example. Not just for Digimon fans only, but may as well be after all. CVG


Throwing objects can stun, disorientate and burn Digimon. Bok!

All Digimon have show-off moves to upset their rival, but don't get too cocky


Only Wormmon is able to climb up the walls


Impmon sets your tail on fire and can suck all his energy back


Avoid the lightning or you'll get fried. Alternatively get hit by it for a laugh

Terriermon towel-whips other Digimon with its stoopid flappy ears

COOL COOL CULUMON

About halfway through each battle, the world's cutest Digimon, Culumon, flies into the areas.

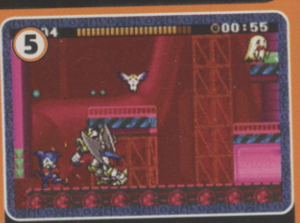
If you bump into it, your Digimon Digivolves into its ultimate form and is invincible for about 15 seconds. Keep your rival away from Culumon or you'll suffer the consequences.

Culumon causes any Digimon it touches to Digivolve into its highest form

Sukamon Digivolves into this poo-shaded monkey, and goes on to beat the living crap out of you

We think Renamon's Digivolved state is the coolest of the lot. It summons lightning - whooah!

Impmon's stylish Digivolve is fairly tricky to beat in the one-player mode


Every attack taken from a Digivolved Digimon counts for four times the amount of damage

games VERDICT

Here we have a fun fighter that serves the Digimon theme very well, but if you're not excited by the characters you won't be so enthralled by the action. **Paul D**

- ■ Great-looking Digimon with cute combat moves
- ■ The closest thing to Smash Bros on GBA
- ■ Very simple - it's for kids after all (but if you're a kid, that's okay)
- ■ Not many gameplay options. Boo!

6 OUT OF TEN

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Typical. No prizes for a month and then a whole legion of classy goodies arrive on CVG's doorstep all at once. To celebrate the launch of Capcom's beautiful and stylish twist on the action genre, we have teamed up with Chaos Legion's publisher to bring you not one, not two, not three but FOUR fantastic first prize bundles in a competition so good there ought to be a law against it.

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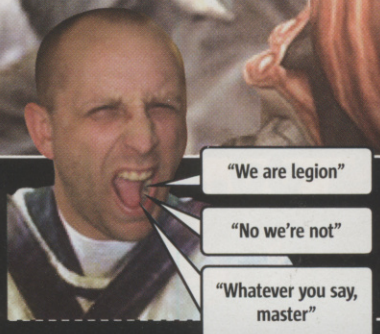

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Capcom describe Chaos Legion as a...

- A ..... Gothic Opera
- B ..... Renaissance Ballet
- C ..... Post-Modern Recital

"Check the review, eejit"

QUESTION 2

Chaos Legion's plot features strange relics with the power to open the...

- A ..... Pearly Gates
- B ..... Gateway Of Chaos
- C ..... Car Door

"Eponymous, wasn't that Link's horse?"

Question 3

Chaos Legion's hero Sieg can summon...

- A ..... Sprites
- B ..... Legions
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"They'd look a bit Foreign in Oxford Street"

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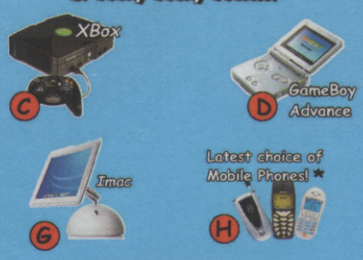

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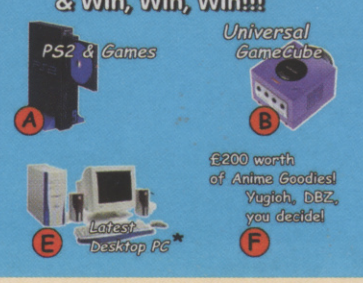

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HANDS-ON WITH 25 NEW TITLES!

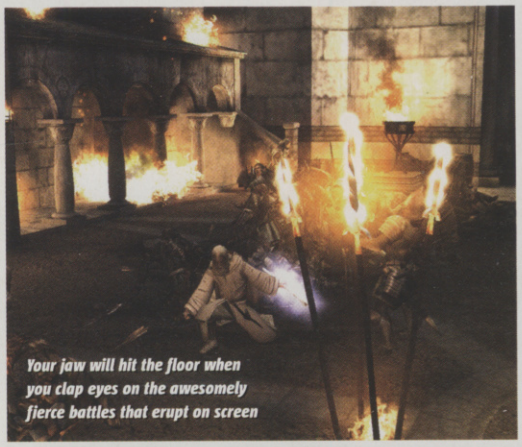
BUSTED WIDE OPEN

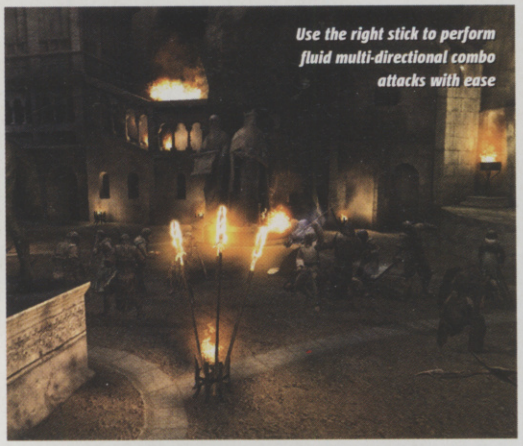
EXCLUSIVE VIP ACCESS TO FIFA 2004, RETURN OF THE KING, SSX3 AND STACKS OF OTHER UPCOMING EA STUNNERS

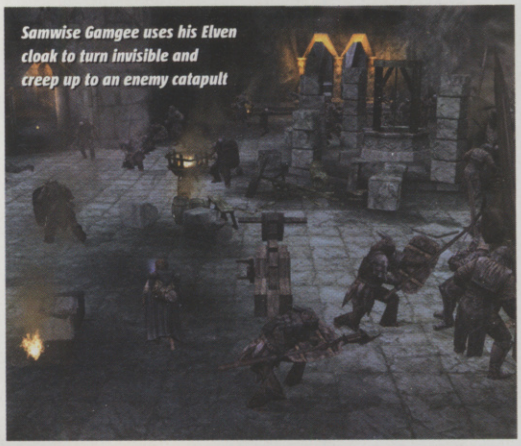
This month heavyweight games publisher EA invited CVG to sunny San Francisco to play its bountiful line-up of scorchers for 2003/4. Naturally we obliged.

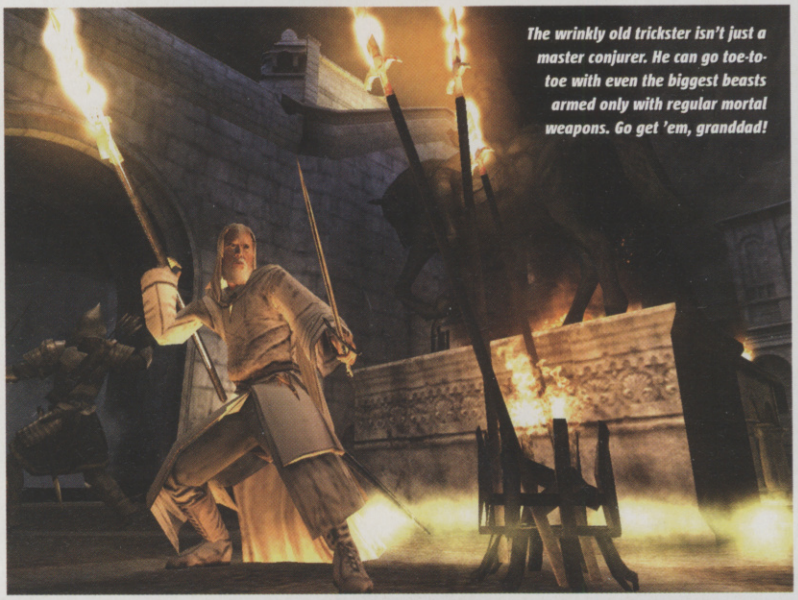
Stateside, the stars were out in force, looking slick and strutting their funky stuff. We mingled with and schmoozed the lot of 'em, and in this exclusive hands-on report CVG brings you all the gossip on how they're coming along. Marvel at James Bond abseiling down burning buildings in Everything Or Nothing, gawp at Gandalf going gaga in Return Of The King, and be in awe of Thierry Henry's blinding ball skills in FIFA 2004.

We got to hammer a total of 25 stunners, and they're all laid bare over the next eight jam-packed pages. Don't miss the first playtests of Need For Speed Underground, Medal Of Honor Rising Sun and the never-before-seen NFL Street. Get stuck in!


Your jaw will hit the floor when you clap eyes on the awesomely fierce battles that erupt on screen


Use the right stick to perform fluid multi-directional combo attacks with ease


Samwise Gamgee uses his Elven cloak to turn invisible and creep up to an enemy catapult


The wrinkly old trickster isn't just a master conjurer. He can go toe-to-toe with even the biggest beasts armed only with regular mortal weapons. Go get 'em, granddad!

● FORMAT: PS2, XB, GC, PC ● DEVELOPER: EA REDWOOD SHORES ● PLAYERS: 1-2 ● OUT: WINTER

UP TO YOU TO DECIDE THE FATE OF MIDDLE-EARTH

No, the Crack Of Doom isn't another name for Vanessa Feltz's bum cleavage. It's the hotspot within the fiery depths of Mount Doom where you must toss the One Ring in order to save Middle-Earth.

But this being Lord Of The Rings 'n' all, getting there is a brutal adventure rammed with bloody action and fearsome surprises. Just as we like it.

You'll get to take on the Dark Lord Sauron in a final climactic showdown

Return Of The King is the last LOTR game in the trilogy, so EA has pulled out all the stops to ensure that this orc-fest is the most explosive, atmospheric and intense quest in the series. Looks-wise it drops a huge troll's turd on the previous Rings games. The staggering amount of detail, new motion-captured animations and gorgeously crafted interactive landscapes make Return Of The King the most jaw-dropping LOTR experience yet.

THE TWO POWERS

This final episode builds on the classic arcade hack 'n' slash action of the previous game, hurling a host of new features into the mix to crank up the fun level.

No longer do you have to fight Sauron's minions on your lonesome. ROTK introduces an awesome co-op mode that enables you and a buddy to bust Urak-Hai butt side by side. But it's not split-screen. You share it. Don't fret though, because you're not constrained to a fixed area. When the two of you split up and go in different directions the camera zooms out to account for your wanderings.

You get the option to play through different sections of the co-op adventure as Frodo and Sam or a variety of other set partnerships. And there are tons of opportunities for tag team-style chaos in the co-op mode. But you must quickly learn to adopt and play up to the strengths of your chosen heroes if you hope to get through a level in one piece. Like when nippy Legolas must corner and kill hoards of orcs while Gimli, who's far less agile, focuses on knocking seven shades out of an enormous Cave Troll using his powerful axe attacks.

BEHIND ENEMY LINES

Ring lovers will lap up the news that you now get to explore some of the most exciting areas in Middle-Earth – places that have previously been off limits. The Paths Of The Dead, Pelennor Fields, the Black Gate – it's all in here. But unlike the last couple of LOTR games, the environments are far more interactive. Swing from ropes, kick boulders, fire catapults and drop chandeliers on gangs of gormless orcs. There's heaps of this sort of stuff stuffed into each stage.

Okay, so it's not exactly revolutionary in terms of gameplay, but ROTK is already a super-tight and polished fantasy arcade thriller. And as far as movie tie-ins go, this final outing for Frodo and co. promises to be right up there with the best of the best.

Becks has made it into the Real Madrid team just in time, equipped with girlie headband

Pick out and take control of a player using the new off-the-ball control system

EA SPORTS FIFA SOCCER 2004

If you manage to sprint into a space you'll have a much greater chance of hitting the back of the net

Choose for the camera to swing around behind the player for an ass-on view

ONLINE AND OUT FOR PRO EVO'S BLOOD

● FORMATS: PS2, XBOX, GC, PC, PSONE, GBA
● DEVELOPER: EA CANADA ● PLAYERS: 1-8 ● OUT: OCTOBER

You'll probably be surprised to hear that Michael Owen only spends 14 seconds on the ball throughout an entire 90-minute game. We were.

EA revealed this fascinating nugget of information to us for a reason. As heaps of action in a real-life footie game takes place away from the player with the ball, FIFA 2004 introduces a new off-the-ball control feature. That doesn't mean picking your nose while another player takes a penalty. EA has gone to great lengths to build a new system that encourages you to move players who aren't on the ball.

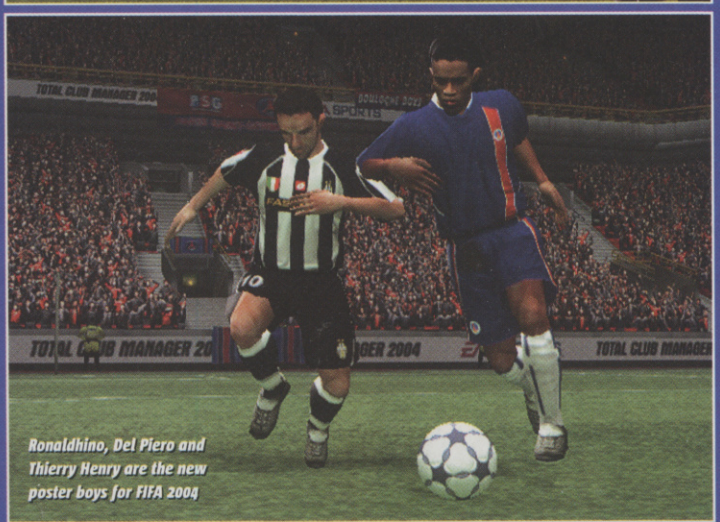
REMOTE-CONTROLLED STARS

Hit the dedicated Remote Receiver Control button while legging it along with the ball at your feet. Button icons appear above four different attacking players on your team.

When these symbols appear, say on PS2, and you press and hold the triangle button, you will gain control of that player briefly. Once you let go of the button the player with the ball will launch a pass.

What this new feature enables you to do is physically manoeuvre the receiving player into space, making it easier to nail long-range passes and intricate moves. Also, you no longer have to rely on the AI of your computer team-mates, who often don't make the runs that you want.

Twenty-four leagues, around 500 teams and 10,000 real-life players. It's stat-tastic!



Ronaldhino, Del Piero and Thierry Henry are the new poster boys for FIFA 2004

TOTAL CLUB MANAGER

● DEVELOPER: EA ● OUT: AUTUMN ● FORMAT: PC, PS2 ● PLAYERS 1

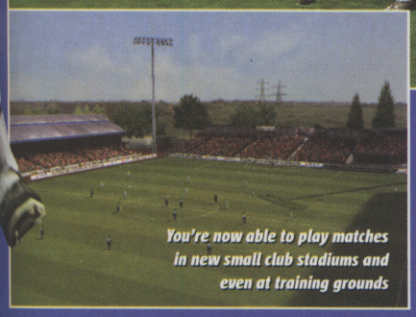
Take control of your favourite team from the sidelines and run them even further into the ground.

This is standard footie management stuff, with the added bonuses of being fully licensed and having an interface that favours tables and charts over endless numbers. Other features include real-time player negotiations and the ability to choose which luxury resort your players visit for off-season training. Hard lives, these footballers.

Pick your players, tweak their tactics, and hopefully avoid getting sacked

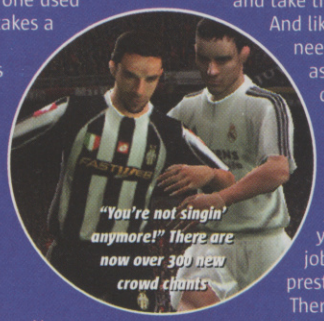
Get your bids in for your player of choice but don't hang around or you'll lose out

Pires throws his weight about in the box. Use the right stick to push the opposing player away from you


You're now able to play matches in new small club stadiums and even at training grounds

It's a similar system to the one used in the Madden NFL games. It takes a bit of getting used to, but this new method of play soon feels comfortable. However, CVG has a few niggling reservations about how effective it will prove to be over time. Because although it gives you more accuracy, it doesn't feel as instantaneous, instinctive or risky as a daring off-the-cuff move.

Other off-the-ball activities include a new tackling technique. You now have the ability to defend with one player and call in another to assist in the challenge. Also, when you're in the box waiting for a corner to swing in you can jostle with your opposite man using the right analog stick. But if you shove him too much the ref will award a freekick or a penalty depending on whether you're going for goal or defending.


"You're not singin' anymore!" There are now over 300 new crowd chants

AIM FOR THE NET

This FIFA isn't just a standard annual update. With the awesome Pro Evo 3 warming up to wow the world, EA has been forced to pull its socks up in an effort to make this *the* ultimate fan's game.

The new off-the-ball moves prove that EA is keen to innovate, and the improved ball physics, awesome likenesses and organic player animations are sure to impress. But there's much more to FIFA 2004 than gameplay tweaks and refined realistic visuals.

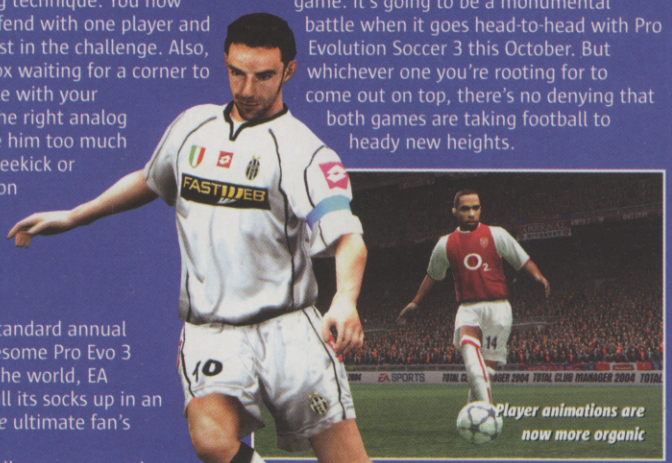
One of the biggest surprises is the leap into the online arena. You can play one-on-one against players all over the world, and take part in online leagues and tournaments that EA will be setting up. Plug in a USB headset and you can taunt your opponent and chant insults at them to your heart's content. And there are plans for downloadable content, such as new haircuts and kit updates. However, online gaming will only be available on PS2 and PC.

IT'S ALL ABOUT REPUTATION

There's more. FIFA 2004 introduces lower division leagues along with new top Dutch and Portuguese leagues. But where this really comes into play is in the new Player Manager Career Mode where you get to build a team and take them up through the divisions. And like any management game you need to train and transfer players, as well as cope with random acts of God such as mood swings, illness and injury.

The better your team does, the more reputation points you earn. And the better your reputation the more likely your chances are of landing a job at a bigger and more prestigious club.

There's so much in the new FIFA game. It's going to be a monumental battle when it goes head-to-head with Pro Evolution Soccer 3 this October. But whichever one you're rooting for to come out on top, there's no denying that both games are taking football to heady new heights.


Player animations are now more organic

The crowd shows its appreciation with a sea of banners

NBA LIVE 2004

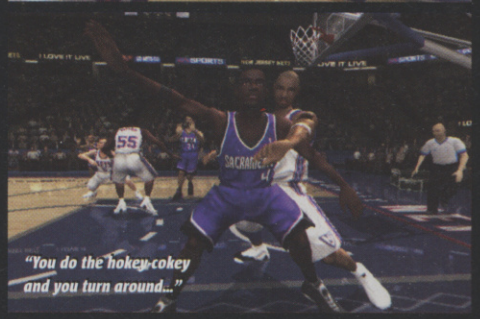
● DEVELOPER: EA CANADA ● OUT: AUTUMN
● FORMAT: PC, PS2, XBOX, GC ● PLAYERS 1-4

More larger-than-life bouncy-balled madness, enhanced and updated for the new season.

The right analog stick freestyle control has been expanded, allowing even more ridiculous tricks, and the dynasty mode, which sees you take a single team to glory, has been improved.

It's all about authenticity, so expect the usual player updates, true-to-life stadiums, historical teams, excitable commentators and general razzmatazz.

Hands up if you love basketball


"You do the hokey-cokey and you turn around..."

RUGBY 2004

● DEVELOPER: HB STUDIOS ● OUT: SEPTEMBER 5 ● FORMAT: PS2 ● PLAYERS 1-4

Rugby fans haven't had the chance to get all dirty and chummy with big men on PS2 for a while, but this should satisfy any desire in that area.

New features include a revised control method that offers more intuitive control of the action, a scrum of accurately modelled stadiums, in-depth commentary and all the licensed teams you could ever want, and the presentation is slicker than a fly half's shorts.

Player likenesses and crowd sound samples heighten the atmosphere

A three-man pile-up plays out as team-mates look on inquisitively

NHL 2004

● DEVELOPER: ELECTRONIC ARTS BLACK BOX ● OUT: SEPTEMBER 19
● FORMAT: GC, PC, PS2, XBOX ● PLAYERS 1-4

Ice hockey is a game of skill, poise, grace, and beating the absolute crap out of people – which is just why we like it.

Obviously this is not lost on EA as most of the new features involve making it easier to put your frosty fist through someone's face. New fight controls aside, the AI has been tweaked, statistics updated, and new international teams added.

For puck's sake! Bone-crunching physics means you hit the ice hard

Flying round the corner you carve up the ice, powder flying

SSX3

● DEVELOPER: EA CANADA ● OUT: AUTUMN
● PLAYERS: 2 ● FORMAT: GBA, GC, PS2, XBOX

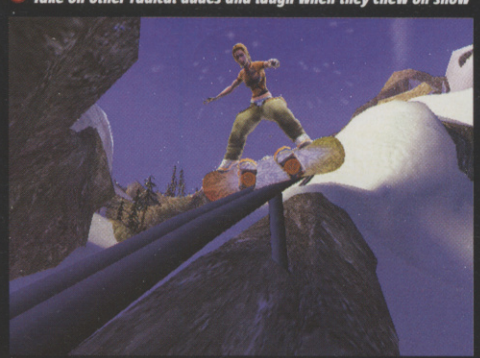
As already reported in CVG, the latest in the ultra-cool SSX series lets you carve all over a humungous mountain in order to find the most awesome adrenalin rush. It's a great concept that works like a snow-covered dream.

If you want to chill out you can slide around in search of hidden challenges and secret collectables. Fancy getting all crazy and wild? You can engage in over 100 blood-pumping challenges, speeding and tricking your way down the mountain in the most stylish way possible. The control system remains essentially the same but a new combo system means you can link endless tricks together in a flurry of flailing limbs.

The environment is more interactive now, too, and you might find yourself dodging red hot bolts of lighting or desperately racing from a thundering avalanche. It all flows extremely well and the presentation is smoother than the underside of a waxed snowboard.

The mountain is really beautiful and offers heaps of ways to pass your time. Like you can just fly off the side of it. Cool

Take on other radical dudes and laugh when they chew on snow



Take a rail down the mountain and bust out a new über-trick

Since GoldenEye no Bond game is complete without an abseil

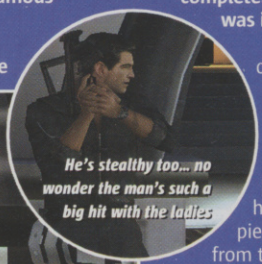
Have you been eating garlic? Bond's coolest enemies live again!

JAMES BOND
EVERYTHING OR NOTHING
MAKE LIKE THE SPY WHO LOVED EVERYBODY

● FORMAT: GBA, GC, PS2, XBOX ● DEVELOPER: EA ● OUT: AUTUMN 2003 ● PLAYERS: 1-4

Ah, Mr Bond. We have been expecting you. The world's most famous spy returns in another videogame that promises to get you even closer to the experience of being the man everyone wants to be. It plays completely in the third-person viewpoint that was introduced in NightFire.

At last: he actually looks and sounds like the real thing



He's stealthy too... no wonder the man's such a big hit with the ladies

Seeing Pierce Brosnan under your control, blasting away at bad guys with his trusty Walther and chatting up the ladies with silky ease, really makes you feel like you're in a movie. The variety of things Bond can do in the situations in which he finds himself is fantastic, and the action set pieces look like they've come straight from the silver screen. For example, in one level you must leap from an exploding building and abseil down, all the while dodging rupturing windows and evading pursuing enemies. Intense.

The action will take Bond all over the world and there'll be more beautiful women and slinky

ALIENS VS PREDATOR: EXTINCTION

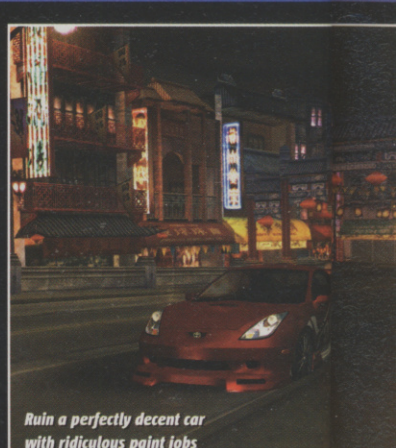
● DEVELOPER: ZONO, INC ● OUT: SUMMER ● PLAYERS: 1 ● FORMAT: PS2, XBOX

Aliens and Predators together on the same planet? Someone's going to get hurt. Put some trigger-happy Colonial Marines in the mix and things are going to get really nasty.

All three factions are controllable in this real-time strategy and each should display refreshingly varied characteristics. Aliens will swarm on enemies in huge numbers, while Predators will use stealth and deception. New creatures never seen before in the movies are promised and the upgradable unit structure should mean there are plenty of ways to blow up enemies, regardless of their species.

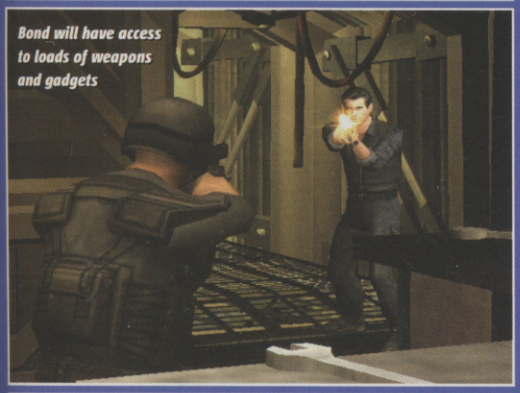
Come face to face with alien life-forms and shoot them. Quickly

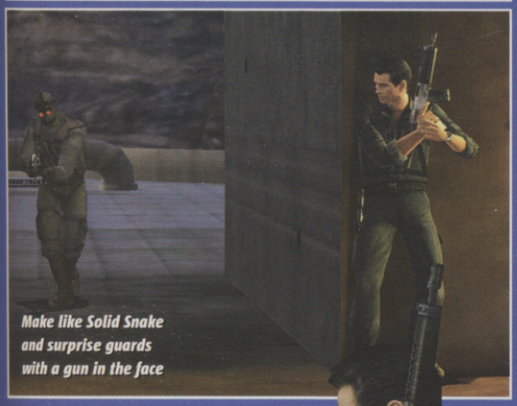
We'd like to hear the David Attenborough comment on this fella



Ruin a perfectly decent car with ridiculous paint jobs

Bond can do all sorts of cool new things, like riding this growling bike


Bond will have access to loads of weapons and gadgets


Make like Solid Snake and surprise guards with a gun in the face

cars than you can shake a laser-guided rocket-firing pen at.

A list of Hollywood stars are on board to lend their likenesses and voices, including the likes of Judi Dench, Willem Dafoe, Heidi Klum and Shannon Elizabeth. And if that's not cinematic enough for you, metal-gnashered mentalist Jaws even makes an appearance! Be Bond from autumn.

NFL STREET

● FORMAT: PS2, XBOX ● DEVELOPER: EA TIBURON ● PLAYERS: 1-4 ● OUT: SPRING 2004

Understanding NFL rules and play is about as easy as learning Japanese in an afternoon. But NFL Street breaks it down and is the first American Football that really *anyone* can enjoy.

Pull off showboating moves to charge up and unlock a Gamebreaker special move

Choose specific players to suit the type of pitch you're playing on. It's all about tactics...

Most of us at CVG are total NFL morons, but when we played it in San Francisco we found it dead easy to pick up and probably the most fun we've ever had tossing a lemon-shaped ball. It's only seven on seven, so the set plays are much easier to get to grips with as there are fewer players involved in moves.

It's going to be online, but only for PS2, and EA is remaining tight-lipped about any online modes. Stay tuned for more on this fun-loving arcade hard-hitter over the coming months.

Once you've mastered the rules, play cooperatively or go head to head with up to three other mates

Rapidly hammer the button when a player grabs hold of you to shove them out of the way

COMMAND & CONQUER: GENERALS ZERO HOUR

● DEVELOPER: EALA ● OUT: SUMMER
● PLAYERS: 1-8 ● FORMAT: PC

The first expansion pack for Generals, Zero Hour is a collection of 15 new single-player missions armed to the teeth with new weapons, new upgrades and the same old ideological stereotypes.

The new Generals Challenge mode sees you battling against AI Generals in order to unlock new armies and skirmish modes. And, of course, there will be new super-weapons so you too can harness the power of Armageddon.

Forget about the worries of reality and battle global terrorism. Hold on...

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND

● DEVELOPER: EA BLACK BOX ● OUT: SUMMER ● PLAYERS: 1-4 ● FORMAT: GBA, GC, PC, PS2, XBOX

Turbo-charged with real, licensed cars that you can customise to your petrol-headed content with actual street-racing parts, this little gem is looking like the first game to truly recreate that Fast And The Furious feeling.

Taking part in drag races or street circuits, you'll attempt to win money to trick out your motor and rule the streets. When the game shifts into top gear the results are astounding. The city blazes past you in an orgy of crackling neon and the well-balanced control system means you're always just one twitch of the controller away from failure.

The racing is brilliantly intense with you constantly battling for the edge

The racing encourages risk-taking, forcing you to push the accelerator to the floor to even have a chance of winning but simultaneously increasing your chances of wrapping all that carbon fibre round a lamppost. If all goes well, NFS Underground should be one of the most intense gaming experiences for a long time.

Slam your foot down and the city melts into a blur. It's like your glasses are the wrong prescription

THE SIMS 2

● FORMAT: PC ● DEVELOPER: MAXIS
● OUT: EARLY 2004 ● PLAYERS: 1

The Sims was an all-consuming, life-stealing game. The sequel promises to take all of the original features and pump them full of evolutionary DNA.

Most exciting of all, the Sims now grow up into adults, pass down their personal characteristics to their kids, and eventually die. Decisions you make will affect your Sim in later life, so if you're a lazy, fast-food-scoffing couch potato you'll get a big pot belly. It's going to make you care even more about your little simulated people. With hundreds of new items to waste your money on and the ability to build houses over two levels, you can now well and truly spoil them. Okay, so it's not cool, but it's going to be more fun than picking scabs. Prepare to forget about your real life early next year.

There ain't no party like a Sims 2 party! Characters now have facial expressions

Playing the Sims 2 might be the only chance you have of sharing a Jacuzzi with two babes

THE SIMS: BUSTIN' OUT

● FORMAT: GC, PS2, XBOX, GBA
● DEVELOPER: GRIPTONITE GAMES/AMAZE ENTERTAINMENT (GBA), MAXIS ● OUT: DECEMBER

Also on the Sim horizon is a sequel to the hugely popular console versions of the Sims.

Bustin' Out lets you get out of the house and traipse around town, visiting locations like a jumping nightclub, a serene art gallery, and a sweaty gym. There are loads of new objects exclusive to the consoles and some funky new people to meet.

Bustin' Out lets you get out and about and meet the girl of your dreams

Wander up to any vehicle, hop in, and take it for a spin. But don't go thinking that the Huey helicopters are a doddle to control. You'll need to put in serious hours of airtime before your become a master of the skies

BATTLEFIELD™ VIETNAM

● FORMAT: PC ● DEVELOPER: DIGITAL ILLUSIONS ● PLAYERS: 1-64 ● OUT: SPRING 2004

SMELL THE NAPALM IN THE MORNING

Battlefield Vietnam is so immersive that you can almost feel your nostrils burning with the smell of napalm.

It's the sequel to Battlefield 1942, the online 64-player phenomenon that has taken the PC community by storm. But Vietnam is set to have armies of new recruits signing up to experience the ultimate in multiplayer warfare where almost anything and everything is possible.

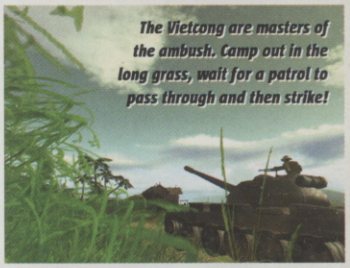
APOCALYPSE WOW!

All boundaries are stripped bare. Want to airlift a tank with a helicopter into enemy territory? Go ahead. Set up booby traps? No problem. Fly into battle alongside other choppers with Ride Of The Valkyries pumping out of the on-board stereo to scare the crap out of your foes below? Feel free.

Picture it. You're playing as the Vietcong and come under attack from a squad of Yankee grunts. As you duck behind a burnt-out truck for cover you spot a scooter. Make a sprint for it, hop on, and zip away out of the killing zone and go tell your buddies.

That's the amazing thing about Battlefield Vietnam. You can truly let your imagination run wild, allowing for some of the most dynamic and exiting battle scenarios witnessed online.

All the outfits and weaponry are fully authentic to the Vietnam War



The Vietcong are masters of the ambush. Camp out in the long grass, wait for a patrol to pass through and then strike!

Detail is gobsmacking. You can see the creases in the Ace of Spades wedged in his helmet

FREEDOM FIGHTERS

● FORMAT: PS2, XBOX, PC ● DEVELOPER: IO INTERACTIVE
● PLAYERS: 1-4 ● OUT: OCTOBER

This arcadey squad-based adventure sees you blitzing your way through the streets of New York, in a parallel universe where the Russians won the Cold War.

The street-fighting action feels fast, intense and relentless. You can recruit and command up to 12 allies. However, at first you can only enlist a handful of fighters. You've got to build up your Charisma Bar by getting stuck in and not just letting your team do all the dirty work. When the bar fills up you gain the ability to enrol an extra soldier.

Although it's just essentially a simple arcade shooter, the AI of your team is surprisingly sharp. They always hunt for cover or a decent vantage point and react swiftly and realistically to your commands.

You'll need everything you've got to take out those pesky Russians

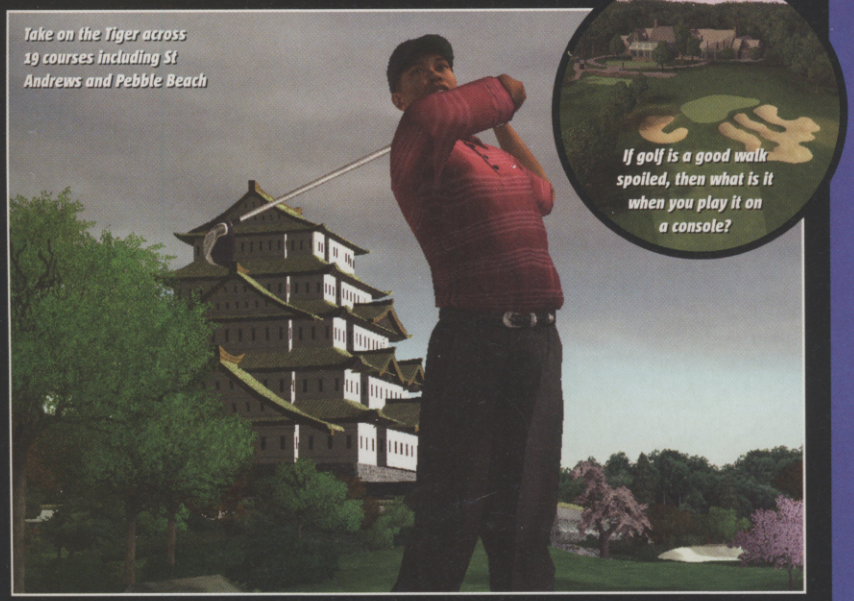
There are multiple ways to successfully complete a mission. Here's one of them

TIGER WOODS 2004

● FORMAT: GBA, GC, PC, PS2, XBOX ● DEVELOPER: EA REDWOOD SHORES ● OUT: AUTUMN ● PLAYERS: 1-4

Another instalment in EA's proven sports series, Tiger Woods has become the only choice for armchair golfers on console.

Now you'll be able to place your own sweet features using the Game Face option, as you embark upon the adrenalin-fuelled life of a professional golfer. New pros to swing against include John Daly, and online support for PS2 means you could even start up your own exclusive country club.



Take on the Tiger across 19 courses including St Andrews and Pebble Beach

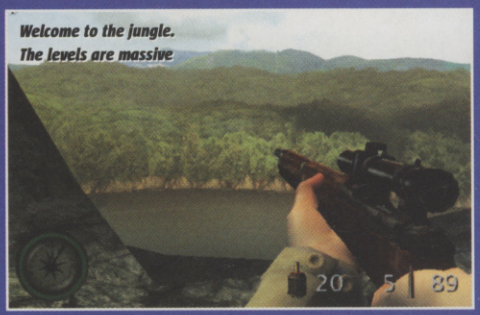
If golf is a good walk spoiled, then what is it when you play it on a console?

MEDAL OF HONOR: RISING SUN

● FORMAT: GC, PS2, XBOX ● DEVELOPER: EALA
● OUT: AUTUMN ● PLAYERS: 1-8

You can't really beat shooting a Nazi. There's just something so satisfying about it.

However, they weren't the only enemy in the Second World War, so to even up the score a bit Rising Sun lets you shoot Japanese soldiers. The game begins in typically extravagant style, with you smack bang in the middle of the Japanese assault on Pearl Harbor. Survive that, and it's onwards to the jungles of the Pacific and even to mainland Asia. The environments are bigger and more open, and a two-player cooperative mode should add multiplayer thrills.



Welcome to the jungle. The levels are massive

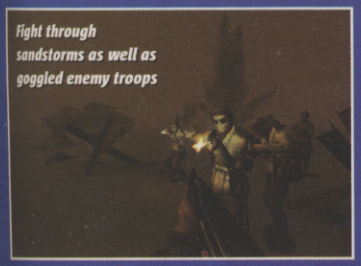
Animals roam the huge levels, giving the environment a more realistic feel

Looks like this dude might be up for a spot of poaching

MEDAL OF HONOR BREAKTHROUGH

● FORMAT: PC ● DEVELOPER: EALA/TKO
● OUT: AUTUMN ● PLAYERS: 1-32

This expansion pack includes 11 new single-player missions, nine new multiplayer levels, new weapons and access to vehicles and air strikes so you can continue blowing up your friends.



Fight through sandstorms as well as goggled enemy troops

LOONEY TUNES BACK IN ACTION

● FORMAT: GBA, PS2 ● DEVELOPER: WARTHOG PLC
● OUT: AUTUMN ● PLAYERS: 1

Control Daffy Duck and Bugs Bunny and use their individual skills to conquer five huge levels of colourful cartoon platform madness.

Expect all your favourite characters like Elmer Fudd and Porky Pig, loads of collectables to find and all sorts of hilarious ways to batter the bad guys.

Be vewy quiet, I'm hunting wabbit

Ride the logs. You love it

DISNEY'S PARTY

● FORMAT: GBA, GC, ● DEVELOPER: HUDSON SOFT
● OUT: AUTUMN 2003 ● PLAYERS: 1-4

There ain't no party like a Disney party.

Get your pals together and prepare for some good, wholesome, friendly competition as you battle it out on heaps of mini-games across 14 different worlds. You might find yourself outrunning an avalanche on a snowboard or clambering over an obstacle course.

Bounce around mini-games and beat your mates as Mickey Mouse

Games include platform levels, races and wacky sports games

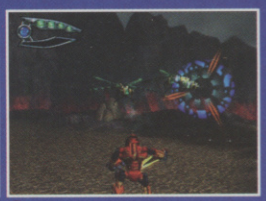
BIONICLE

● FORMAT: GC, PC, PS2, XBOX ● DEVELOPER: ARGONAUT GAMES
● OUT: AUTUMN 2003 ● PLAYERS: 1

Based on a Lego toy, Bionicle sees you taking control of six magical warriors to battle against the forces of evil.

Your quest? To restore your island paradise to the forces of light. You can harness elemental forces to bring the pain to your enemies, but puzzle-solving will be required as much as fast-paced action.

Varied environments include lava lakes and snowy mountain peaks



Use cool weapons and some earth-shaking magic in your quest

SIM CITY 4 RUSH HOUR

● FORMAT: PC ● DEVELOPER: MAXIS ● OUT: AUTUMN ● PLAYERS: 1

The worst thing about the city, apart from black gunk in your nose and all the roaming mentalists, is getting around.

Rush Hour gives you loads more transport options to make sure your city moves along smoothly and even lets you take control of your emergency services so you can get to that raging inferno quicker.

Planes, trains and automobiles - they're all in the expansion pack

CACKMAN'S THOUGHT OF THE MONTH Thank Zion I bought that crappy Matrix game for the film clips! They'll never think to stick all that in as extras come the DVD release.

CACKMAN©

THE INDEPENDENT VOICE OF THE FREE GAMING NATION

FINNISHED

Nokia is claiming its new N-GAGE mobile phone is going to change the gaming landscape forever.

Cackman wants to believe it, and he also wants to believe that the call to go and play nudie Twister at Cameron Diaz's house could happen any time. Here are the reasons all existing games machines and phones have fried their microchips in sheer terror:

Super-narrow screen! Ideal for epic-scale adventure games like Tomb Raider where being able to see as little as possible in no way ruins the entire atmosphere

Slightly raised 'action' buttons integrated into the keypad. Ideal for accidentally speed-dialling your mate in the US while playing Monkey Ball

Side-mounted mic and speaker, holding phones sideways on your face is the cool new thing. That and smearing poo all over your clothes before leaving the house

Stiff and unresponsive Dpad that's about as comfortable as wearing a pair of broken glass pants while Nasser Hussain smashes you in the balls with a baseball bat

You actually have to disassemble the whole unit to get a new game in. Yes! Why did Nintendo bin its take-18-screws-out-to-get-a-game-in GBA prototype? The fools!

Ultra-competitive price! For the same money you could only get a Game Boy Advance and an Xbox, which look like ZX Spectrums next to N-GAGE

Online functionality! Watch basic polygons jerk around while hooked up to a friend. Don't worry about how long you're on: mobile phone calls are practically free!

ONLY $299

MARIO 128 EXPOSED

Nintendo isn't risking showing Mario 128 because the gameplay is so innovative it doesn't want to be copied.

Thankfully it did the same thing with Mario Sunshine, so nobody could beat it to making a game about cleaning up after somebody drew on the wall in pen. Cackman's got a fair idea what the surprises are, though:

1. The Mario Brothers unveil a new weapon in their armoury: a washing machine. So after they've washed your car and hoovered, they can do the laundry.
2. Introduction of Wa-Yoshi, who shits out actual crap instead of eggs. Also Wa-Peach, who's like Christina Aguilera and makes part of Mario's body get bigger *without* a mushroom.
3. The Mushroom Kingdom switches over to Euros. It's notes instead of coins, they all get blown away, and a skint Mario has his house repossessed.
4. Nintendo saves time by offering a special double disc pack at twice the price! One has the GameCube game, and the other is an exact duplicate playable only on Game Boy Really, Really Advanced, which will launch in 2008.

Mario goes and smashes up Bowser's house, looking for 'kidnapped' Princess Peach. Turns out she'd just popped out to buy some milk and Bowser calls the police

LETTERS TO CACKMAN

Dear Cackman,
Have you played The Wind Waker yet? It's one of the most original games ever.
Dan Halford, Newcastle
I'll buy it! I hated how in the last one he got special powers through music, found a Master Sword and defeated Ganon. It's nothing like that, is it?

Dear Cackman,
What is the real reason for GameCube not being online?
Mark White, Chester
A 'network', by definition, is lots of machines linked together. Recent figures show more people are buying Atari Jaguars than GameCubes, so there will never be enough out there for a network.

WRITE TO CACKMAN

You lot must have ideas. Questions. Theories. Write to Cackman at the usual address, and the best will win an awesome prize! Senders of anything Cackman considers to be crap will be subjected to GBH in text form on this very page. Come on! You want to be famous, don't you? What else have you got to live for in your stupid little lives?

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CRAZY IN LOVE - Beyonce Knowles	112707	SENORITA - Justin Timberlake	112732	PIMP JUICE - Nelly	112674
IN DA CLUB - 50 Cent	112440	UNIVERSALLY SPEAK... - Red Hot Chili's	112681	WHENEVER YOU FEEL - Kylie Minogue	112680
BUSINESS - Eminem	112695	JOGI - Panjabi MC	112747	REAL THINGS - Javine	112773
GET BUSY - Sean Paul	112634	HOLLYWOOD - Madonna	112722	I'M IN HEAVEN - Jason Nevins	112781
21 QUESTIONS - 50 Cent ft. Nate Dogg	112582	LIKE GLUE - Sean Paul	112785	TRAIN ON THE TRACK - Kelly Rowland	112765
ROCK YOUR BODY - Justin Timberlake	112508	FEEL GOOD TIME - Pink	112755	KISS MY EYES - Bob Sinclair	112817
MAKE LOVE - Room 5	112465	REIGN - Ja Rule	112679	SLEEPING WITH THE LIGHT... - Busted	112819
FAINT - Linkin Park	112713	NEVER GONNA LEAVE... - D Bedingfield	112710	PUMP IT UP - Joe Budden	112831
ROCK WIT YOU (AWW BABY) - Ashanti	112729	GOD PUT A SMILE... - Coldplay	112780	IN LOVE - Lisa Maffia	112832

Yes!!! All Ringtones are Monophonic and Polyphonic *

POLYPHONICS COMPATIBILITY - NOKIA 3510, 3510i, 6610, 7210, 7650. SAMSUNG T100, N600. SHARP GX10. SONY ERICSSON T300. SAGEM MYG-6. MOTOROLA T720. PANASONIC GD87. SIEMENS C55.
RINGTONE COMPATIBILITY - NOKIA: 3210, 3310, 3330, 3410, 5210, 5510, 61XX, 62XX, 6310, 6310i, 8210, 8310, 8110i, 82XX, 7110, 7210, 7650, AND THE 9110i). SAGEM: MC930, MC-MW932, MC936, MC-MW939, MC940, MC942, MC946, MC949 MC950, MC952, MC956 & MC959(R) MOTOROLA: T250, V50, V100, V8088 & TIMEPORT 260 SAMSUNG: T100, N600 SIEMENS: S45, SL45, C45, ME45, M50, A50, C55

WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

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chart

Fast Food Song - Fast Food Rockers	112702
Clocks - Coldplay	112439
Dirrty - Christina Aguilera	112256
Fighter - Christina Aguilera	112649
Guy Bar - Electric Six	112650
I'm Glad - Jennifer Lopez	112671
Skater Boi - Avril Lavigne	112306
Lights Out - Lisa Marie Presley	112631
Cry Me A River - Justin Timberlake	112360

reggae

No Woman No Cry - Bob Marley	111331
Gimme The Light - Sean Paul	112422
Angel - Shaggy	111114
Hey Sexy Lady - Shaggy	112245

indie

I Just Need Myself - Ocean Colour Scene	112815
PIN - Yeah Yeah Yeahs	112820
Pass It On - The Coral	112828
Seven Nation Army - White Stripes	112604

urban

We Just Be Dreamin - Blazin Squad	112721
Can't Get It Back - Mis-Teeq	112733
Favourite Things - Big Brovaz	112560
I Luv You - Dizzee Rascal	112826
Mundian To Bach Ke - Panjabi MC	112342
Scandalous - Mis-Teeq	112444
Nu Flow - Big Brovaz	112232
All Over - Lisa Maffia	112527
Superstar - Blazin' Squad	112519

hip hop

X Gonna Give It To Ya - DMX	112617
Lose Yourself - Eminem	112289
I Know What You Want - Busta Rhymes ft.	112561
Beautiful - Snoop Dogg	112511
Superman - Eminem	112427
Never Scared - Bone Crusher	112827
8 Mile - Eminem	112376
Bump Bump Bump - B2K feat P Diddy	112355
Sing For The Moment - Eminem	112406
Patiently Waiting - 50 Cent feat Eminem	112598
Forget about Dre - Dr Dre	111138
Cleaning Out My Closet - Eminem	112062
Without Me - Eminem	111952
California Love - Dr Dre and Tupac	111189
Magic Stick - Lil Kim feat 50 Cent	112682
03 Bonnie & Clyde - Jay Z feat Beyonce	112327

nu metal

Somewhere I Belong - Linkin Park	112442
Smooth Criminal - Alien Ant Farm	111377
Lifestyles Of The Rich... - G Charlotte	112388
She Hates Me - Puddle Of Mudd	112163
In The End - Linkin Park	111489
No One Knows - Queens Of The Stone Age	112309
The Anthem - Good Charlotte	112493
Girls And Boys - Good Charlotte	112563
Tainted Love - Marilyn Manson	111888

dance

Fly On The Wings Of Love - XTM	112705
Satisfaction - Benny Benassi	112751
Nothing But You - Paul Van Dyk ft. Hemstock	112816
Sleeping Satellite - Aurora	112818
Deepest Blue - Deepest Blue	112821
Shining - Double Dee	112822
Sparks - Royksopp	112825
Loneliness - Tomcraft	112576
Heaven - DJ Sammy	112229
Weekend - Scooter	112466
Wondering Why - MJ Cole feat Vula	112764
Who's Crying Now - DJ Chrome	112766
Forever More - Moloko	112775
Flying Away - Moony	112776
Catch Up To My Step - Junkie XL	112779
The Right Stuff - LC Anderson	112782
Last Night - Vitamin C	112761
All In My Head - Kosheen	112833
It's My Life - Liquid People vs Talk Talk	112783
Your Music - Intense Project	112799
Lets Get This Party Started - Zena	112804
Shake Your Shimmy - Porn Kings vs...	112463
Sunlight - DJ Sammy	112479
Rhythm Is A Dancer - Snap vs CJ Stone	112485
Broken Bones - Love Inc	112632
Damaged - Plummet	112567
Boys Of Summer - DJ Sammy	112387

football

Mr Big Stuff - Soccer AM Catwalk	112559
You'll Never Walk Alone - Liverpool	111351
Match of the Day	111126
Great Escape - Sheffield Wednesday	111354
Glory Glory - Man UTD*	111353
Vindaloo - Fat Les	111349
When The Saints - Southampton	112645

r n b

Ignition - R Kelly	112588
No Letting Go - Wayne Wonder	112690
Dilemma - Nelly feat. Kelly Rowland	112221
All I Have - Jennifer Lopez feat LL Cool J	112359
Rise And Fall - Craig David feat. Sting	112490
Mesmerize - Ja Rule	112365
Don't Wanna Try - Frankie J	112829
Put That Woman First - Jaheim	112830
Breath - Blu Cantrell feat. Sean Paul	112521
Snake - R Kelly feat Tigger	112687
Hot In Herre - Nelly	111977
Angel - Amanda Perez	112795
C'mon - Mario	112813
Miss You - Aaliyah	112369

rock

Bring Me To Life - Evanescence	112651
Sweet Child o Mine - Guns And Roses	111258
Living On A Prayer - Bon Jovi	111376
Cant Stop - Red Hot Chilli Peppers	112404
Bat Out Of Hell - Meatloaf	111286
Enter Sandman - Metallica	111371
How You Remind Me - Nickelback	111671
Drift Away - Uncle Kracker	112823
Paradise City - Guns N Roses	112595

themes

Only Fools And Horses	111369
Mission Impossible	111121
Rocky - Jogging Theme	112481
Big Brother	111342
The Exorcist - Tubular Bells - Mike Oldfield	111403
Scooby Doo	111142
Axel F - Beverley Hills Cop	111601
Muppets	111134
Jackass	112554
James Bond	111119
Matrix - Wake Up - Rage Against Machine	111848
Rocky	111141
Good Bad and the Ugly	111181
The A Team	111115
Phoenix Nights	112364
Winnie The Pooh	111613
Star Wars - Main Theme	111125
Banana Splits	112578
Friends	111152
Knight Rider	111127
Sex And The City	111673
Indiana Jones	111466
The Terminator	111602
Dirty Dancing	111249
Benny Hill	111139
Pink Panther	111133
Looney Tunes	111151
Top Gun	111860
Austin Powers	111255
Hedwig's theme - Harry Potter	111793
Ghostbusters	111455

colour pix

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250011 250014 250013 250015 250036 250043 250031 250047

251181 Jennifer | 251210 Eminem | 251186 Girls Aloud | 251127 Ali G | 251211 Ruud | 251204 Becks | 251152 Holly | 251153 Britney

COLOUR WALLPAPER COMPATIBILITY - NOKIA: 3510i, 3650, 6100, 6610, 7210, 7250, 7650. SONY ERICSSON: T68i, T610, P800. SHARP: GX10. SAMSUNG: VZ200.

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141663 141670 141304 141922 141086 141242 141372 141453

PICTURE MESSAGE COMPATIBILITY - NOKIA: 3210, 3310, 3330, 3410, 3510, 3510i, 5210, 5510, 6210, 6250, 6310, 6310i, 7210, 7650, 8210, 8850, AND 9110i). NOKIA: 3310, 3330, 3410, 5510, 7650 CAN USE PICTURES AS SCREEN SAVERS. ERICSSON: T20E, R520M SAMSUNG: T100, N600 . SONY ERICSSON: T68, T68i SIEMENS: S45, SL45, C45, ME45, M50, A50, C55

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131467 131693 131262 131576
131480 131141 131450 131477
131692 131596 131244 131156

LOGO COMPATIBILITY - NOKIA: 402, 702, 3210, 3310, 3330, 3410, 3510, 3510i, 5110, 5130, 5146, 5210, 5510, 6110, 6130, 6150, 6210, 8250, 6310, 6310i, 7110, 7210, 7650, 8810, 8210, 8310, 8810, 8850, 8890, AND 9110i) ERICSSON: T20E, R520M SAMSUNG: T100, N600 SONY ERICSSON: T68, T68i SIEMENS: S45, SL45, C45, ME45, M50, A50, C55

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